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Grover Cleveland, the man  
and the statesman















GROVER CLEVELAND  
THE MAN AND THE STATESMAN

VOLUME ONE

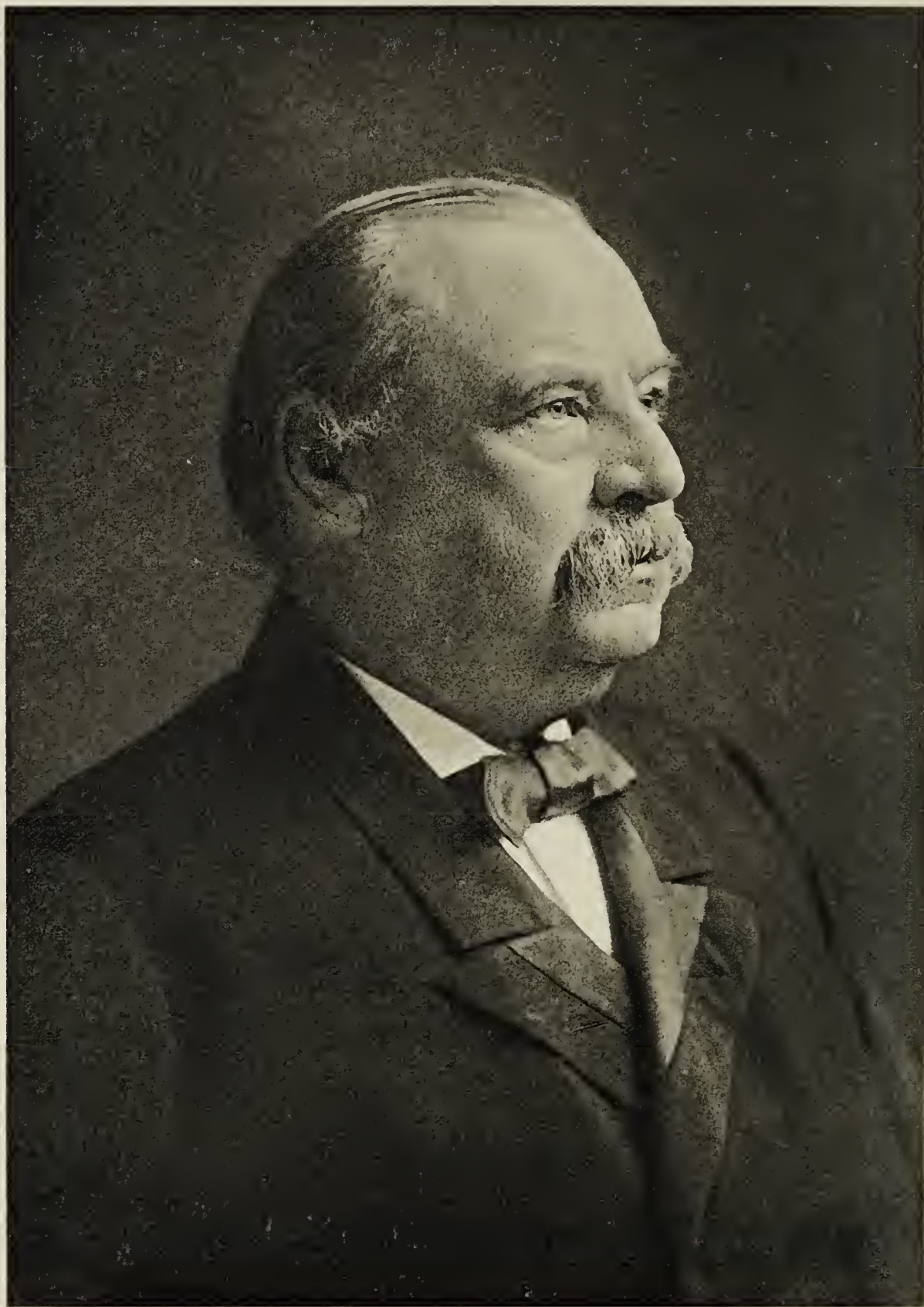






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GROVER CLEVELAND

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CHURCHILL MEMOIRS

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# GROVER CLEVELAND

## THE MAN AND THE STATESMAN

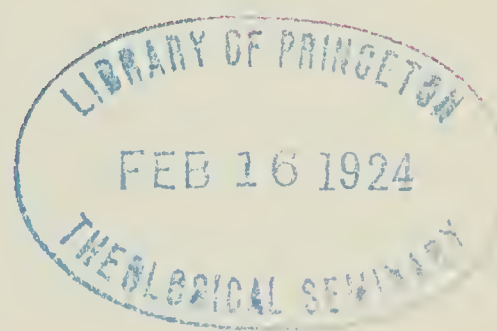
*An Authorized Biography*

BY

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VOLUME

I

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GROVER CLEVELAND  
THE MAN AND THE STATESMAN

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*First Edition*

K-X

To  
My Wife  
whose vermilion pencil deprived  
the world of my noblest sentences



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## INTRODUCTION

We have been told recently that there are too many biographies. The complaint indicates a sense of compulsion to read them. This can come only from a belief that they probably contain something which ought not to be overlooked. The real ground of the condemnation, therefore, is not that biographies are not worth reading, but that they ought to be read and that they therefore impose additional obligations upon men who may perhaps feel overburdened. The condemnation thus becomes a justification.

The most obvious appeal of a biography to the generations which have direct or close knowledge of the man written about; which have knowledge of the things he has done, of the affairs in which he has played part, of the men with or against whom he has worked—is really a very narrow and minor function of biography. The more important function is as an effective mode of presenting history for the benefit of the future, which has to get its knowledge entirely from books or traditions. Biography makes a period interesting by throwing a high light on a central figure and establishing a relation between all the conditions and incidents of the time with that figure. If only one of the significant figures of a period were made the subject of biography there would be an effect of disproportion due to overemphasis. But that is seldom if ever the case. Men worth writing about are naturally grouped in periods. Their biographies reproduce the same background with different emphasis. On

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looking at the period from all these different points of view taken together, we see life in the round standing out from the canvas, with a quality of human interest which it seems quite impossible for any impartial historian to create. Of course there must be balance. If you read Morley's Gladstone you must read Money Penny's Disraeli and the rest of the great Victorian biographies. If you read the life of Jefferson you must also read the lives of Hamilton, and of Marshall and of Adams. If you read Cavour you must also read Garibaldi and Mazzini. The important question is not whether there are too many or too few biographies, but whether the biography of an important period in the world's life is well balanced, whether all the personal points of view, from which enlightenment and correction may come, are adequately represented, so that the aggregate biographies of a period as a whole will convey a correct as well as an interesting conception.

The biography of Grover Cleveland, which Professor McElroy has now completed with great labor and sympathy, is of special importance to the understanding of a very critical period in American history—the period of readjustment to the new conditions created by the Civil War. The readjustment involved, not merely a recovery from the enormous losses of the war which included the entire abolition of property in slaves, but also the great reconciliation between the peoples of the two sections, who, after four years of fighting, of killing and wounding each other, were to try the experiment of living together again as parts of the same people sharing in the conduct of the same government. It was a reconciliation which had to be effected by the same generation which fought the war, because if that generation died unreconciled, bequeathing its resentments and hatreds to a younger gen-



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eration, the undertaking would have been almost hopeless. Inherited hatreds are almost ineradicable. That the reconciliation was effected within the life of that generation and that survivors of the Union and Confederate Armies came to work together with harmony and mutual confidence in the government at Washington, is one of the greatest of American achievements. It was not an easy process but it was aided by two reactions in the sober sense of the North. One, the reaction against the grave error of reconstruction legislation which went upon the theory that by merely giving a vote to the negro he would be made competent to govern. The North became rather ashamed of the exercise of power which inflicted real injustice upon the people of the South by the application of this false theory. The other reaction, also in the dominant North, was against the undue use made by political managers for personal and organization purposes, of the old spirit and memories and shibboleths of the war. For the first twenty years after the war these feelings served to control in the selection of the members of government at Washington. But as the dominant political organization during this long lease of power became more compact and autocratic great numbers of people in the North who sympathized with the war feeling became quite unwilling that it should be utilized for the benefit of a political organization in which they had no practical voice. Under these circumstances the Democratic party, which could not hope to secure control in the nation except by Southern votes, was fortunate enough to find in Mr. Cleveland a man of such a strong personality and such clearly demonstrated capacity upon lines quite outside of the old Civil War contest, that his nomination for the Presidency would divide the Northern vote.

As we look back forty years we can see that it was

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time for new motives to assert themselves in American politics. There could not be a real reunion of States in patriotic sympathy without moral as well as legal amnesty, without really letting bygones be bygones. So long as the control of government turned upon the sympathies and resentments of the Civil War it was inevitable that there should be a sense of proscription by the defeated party which revived bitter feelings upon both sides in every election. The only way in which a change could come was by making the control of government turn upon the new issues which the developing life of the country was bringing on and which did not depend at all upon the old Civil War divisions. There is a certain satisfaction in considering how perfectly Mr. Cleveland was adapted to the requirements of that situation. He was a Northerner and a Democrat, and so available. He was a party man without answering to the ordinary conception of a politician. He belonged to a party as a natural incident to the business of citizenship. He inherited traditions from the earlier days, not so very far remote, when it was considered every man's business to do his part towards maintaining the peace and order of the community. He accepted that as a part of a normal American life; but he never was a political leader in a personal sense and he never tried to be. He never tried to collect about himself any group of followers who would promote his fortunes in the expectation that he would promote theirs. As an incident in the career of a young lawyer he came to be appointed Assistant District Attorney in Buffalo and in that subordinate office he exhibited qualities which led after a time to his being made sheriff, and then mayor of Buffalo, and then governor of the State of New York. He had strong common sense, simplicity and directness without subtlety, instinctive and immov-



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able integrity, perfect courage, a kindly nature with great capacity for friendship and with great capacity also for wrath which made him a dangerous man to trifle with. There was nothing visionary or fanatical about him, but he had a natural hatred for fraud and false pretense, and a strong instinct for detecting the essential quality of conduct by the application of old and simple tests of morality. There was no self-seeking about him. In all his public employments he thought about his job and not about himself. His official judgment was never disturbed by any question as to the effect upon his personal fortunes. He had an exceptionally good mind; a still more exceptionally rugged strength of character; altogether a powerful and attractive personality. When the Presidential nominations of 1884 came to be made Grover Cleveland in his various offices had done more of the honest and courageous things which good government requires and which decent people like to have done, than any other Democrat. That made him the available candidate to change the current of American politics. His election upon that record practically closed the old era of politics dominated by the past and began the new era of politics looking to the future. The strength and courage of his administrations as President confirmed the new departure. No thoughtful and patriotic American, to whatever party he may belong, and however much his opinions may differ from those of Mr. Cleveland, can read the story of those administrations without admiration and sympathy, or without a sense of satisfaction that his country can on occasion produce and honor such a man as Grover Cleveland.

ELIHU ROOT.



GROVER CLEVELAND  
THE MAN AND THE STATESMAN



# GROVER CLEVELAND

## CHAPTER I

### HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT

*"If a man were permitted to make all the homes, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

THE task of the historian is to separate truth from the propaganda of the past, and in the case of a biography this task is often rendered most difficult by the attempts of the subject to prepare his biographer's way before him. But Grover Cleveland made no such attempt. His mind was occupied with present duties, not future fame, and he was content to allow the muse of history to write her verdict without his personal aid. As a result we have neither autobiography nor personal memoir to guide or to misguide us. What we know of Grover Cleveland, the man, has been gathered almost wholly from his contemporaries, and from casual references in letters and speeches written with no thought of the verdict of history. What we know of Grover Cleveland, the statesman, has been culled from documents equally guiltless of propaganda. For, although in later life he published a number of monographs dealing with important incidents in his presidential career, they are, one and all, as impersonal as a presidential message or an executive order; and this is the more remarkable in a man who passed into history before he passed into silence.



According to certain genealogical tables which Dr. David Starr Jordan has examined and accepted, Grover Cleveland, George Washington, King Henry V of England, Theodore Roosevelt, Robert E. Lee, Henry Adams, Jonathan Edwards, Ulysses S. Grant, Benjamin Harrison, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, J. Pierpont Morgan, and John D. Rockefeller were descended from a common ancestry, "each showing one of the many 'direct lines' leading down from Isabel de Vermandois," who died in 1131.

Although interesting, this appears of little real significance, since, as the same authority points out, every person now living would find, should he count back, that, allowing three generations to a century, he has had more than one hundred and thirty-four million ancestors since the year 1100, and more than twice that number if he counted "intervening forbears."

But genealogical studies had little interest for Mr. Cleveland. His indifference to his personal history was equaled by his lack of interest in his family history; and it is due solely to the efforts of others that in England we can trace his family line to the Norman conquest and beyond, while in this country we follow it through all the generations which make up the history of the American people since 1635, when Moses Cleveland landed in Massachusetts, an indented apprentice from Ipswich.

The name Cleveland is of Saxon origin. The estate or the district Cleveland, near the historic town of Whitby, was so called "because of the clefts or cleaves which abounded there." In early days the name was spelled Cliveland, Clyveland, Clievland, Cleivland, Cleaveland, Clevland, Cleveland, Cleffland, Clifland, or in other ways, if others be possible, according to the

fancy of the writer. Such liberties were taken with all names in those happy days of phonetic freedom. But Cleveland or Clyveland, Cliveland or Clifland, every line of the family runs back to England. The genealogical tree is a veritable English oak, with no branch grafted from the Continent.

Starting with Moses, born in 1624, the American branch very properly passes to Aaron, and for four consecutive generations the oldest son bears the latter name. In 1770, however, William Cleveland appeared to break the succession, and his son, Richard Falley Cleveland, was Grover Cleveland's father.

Richard Falley Cleveland was born at Norwich, Connecticut, June 19, 1804. He received his college training at Yale, where he took high honors as of the class of 1824. Soon after graduation, his aim being the Presbyterian ministry, he accepted a post as tutor in Baltimore, where he began his theological studies and at the same time earned enough money to make possible a few months in the Princeton Theological Seminary. In 1828, he was ordained, and accepted the pastorate of the First Congregational Church at Windham, Connecticut. He had, however, left his heart in Baltimore, and in 1829 he returned to recover it, and with it her in whose keeping he had left it, the gentle Ann Neal.

Ann Neal, the mother of Cleveland, has left few traces to aid the biographer eager to do her justice. We know that she was of Irish and French descent, that her father was a publisher of law books in Baltimore, and that she was born in that city on February 4, 1806; but beyond that we know little except that love came early into her life in the handsome person of Richard Cleveland, and that her devotion stood the test of time, changing conditions, and an always scanty income. A country clergy-



man's life in those days meant constant sacrifice, and Ann Neal's sacrifice began when as a bride she returned with her husband to Windham where, in conformity to prevailing local standards, she willingly gave up many innocent enjoyments that the minister's influence might not be jeopardized, or the cause they both loved weakened.

When Ann left her father's house, her colored maid, who had cared for her from infancy, begged to be allowed to accompany her. Thus attended, and rejoicing in many bright articles of personal adornment, she entered the New England manse only to find that colored maids were regarded as unnecessary luxuries, and objectionable, as savoring of slavery. She soon understood also that jewelry was unbecoming a minister's wife. So the faithful servant was cheerfully returned to her Southern home, the treasured little ornaments were laid aside without a sigh, and the bright heart of Ann Neal Cleveland beat under costumes suitable to the wife of a village minister of New England. But the young couple were poor only in goods. They had education, culture, congeniality, and spiritual wealth—resources sufficient to encourage hope of a happy future.

The young wife was not long called upon to walk in the ways of the Puritan. In 1833 the field of their joint labors was transferred to the more familiar atmosphere of Portsmouth, Virginia; and two years later they settled down to the seven years of Richard Cleveland's pastorate at Caldwell, New Jersey.

The Cleveland family had grown since the days in Windham. Two children, Anna, and William Neal, had been born in Connecticut, Mary Allen during the brief pastorate at Portsmouth, and Richard Cecil almost as soon as the trunks were unpacked in the little manse



at Caldwell. Less than two years later, on March 18, 1837, the fifth child was born, and they called him Stephen Grover in honor of the late pastor, whose service at Caldwell had lasted almost half a century, and whose name was there greatly beloved.

In 1841 Reverend Richard Cleveland accepted a call as pastor of a church in Fayetteville, New York, and to Fayetteville, with the others, went the young Grover, traveling the way of the patient, on an Erie Canal boat, which in those days was a method so slow that the Cleverlands were weeks on the journey. Fayetteville, in 1841, was a quiet village, with a good academy, which served the older Cleveland children both as educational and social center. But there were no kindergartens in those days and the education of Grover, the four-year-old, had to wait. His training, however, did not wait. Filial reverence, strict obedience, unquestioning belief in parental wisdom, and ready compliance with parental commands were the presuppositions of life, according to the Puritan creed which dominated the family. "Often and often as a boy," he declared in later years, "I was compelled to get out of my warm bed at night, to hang up a hat or other garment which I had left on the floor."

The commands of the Bible, the memorizing of the Westminster Catechism, the strictest observance of Sunday as the Puritan had understood it, were the elements upon which the character of Grover Cleveland <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ built. Father, mother, and nine children were all supported by the minister's salary, which seldom exceeded six hundred dollars a year.

Under such conditions, simple, cultivated, religious, Grover Cleveland passed the most formative years of his life. With the help of the academy and of his intelligent and well-trained father, he acquired a reasonable pro-

ficiency in Latin and mathematics, and an interest in religious questions which lasted throughout his life.

In the home of his childhood vexed questions such as Sabbath observance were not debated. Each child understood that six days were made for work and play, and one for worship. When the long shadows began to fall on Sabbath eve, playthings were put away, clothes carefully arranged for use on the morrow, an early supper was prepared, in order that there might be ample time for the weekly bath, at which the elder sisters assisted with conscientious thoroughness. For clean hands as well as a pure heart were considered appropriate accompaniments of the day of rest.

While the steaming tubs were playing their part on one side of the kitchen, the one servant, a self-respecting Canadian woman, was preparing the material for Sunday dinner on the other. A peck of potatoes, the roast, the rice pudding with its spices and raisins, all had to be got ready on Saturday.

When the little Clevelands, with ears shining and at times with hearts resentful at the memory of too vigorous gouging, had been tucked into bed, the elder members of the family retired to the church to practice hymns for the service of the morrow. Sunday was itself a discipline—two sermons a day, with Sunday school between, and a prayer meeting in the evening which, on the first Sunday of each month, took the form of a missionary lecture and always closed with the singing of the hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains."

With the end of afternoon service, the strain of piety was a little lightened, and the family assembled for a substantial meal at three-thirty. A walk in the garden or in the orchard beyond the house followed, and at twilight the pastor met his family for an hour of private



worship. Then the little ones were sent to bed, while their elders returned to the church for an evening meeting.

Such was the atmosphere in which Grover Cleveland passed his childhood. It inevitably tended to produce a keen sense of personal responsibility, to make trustworthy character; for its ethical basis was absolute. It taught that there is a right which is eternally right, and a wrong which must remain forever wrong.

To one of Mr. Cleveland's sisters we are indebted for the following memory which shows how early the sense of responsibility was developed in the boy: "It was a very busy day and the last baby was more than usually troublesome. Grover was pressed into service as baby-tender, and encouraged to believe that sleep would soon end his task. The vision of a little round-faced, blue-eyed boy rocking a cradle, with a far-away look out of the window where the 'fellers' were sliding down the hill, is very clear in my memory. His heart was with the boys, but his hand steadily kept the cradle in motion.

"The wide-open eyes of the infant were met by Grover with an hypnotic stare, as he monotonously droned out the refrain, ' 'T is a sin to steal a pin, and how much more a greater thing.' He tried all keys and all modulations; but the baby smile persisted, and the baby eyes watched every motion with a sleepless interest.

"Convinced at last that the combined concert and pantomime were too exciting, Grover changed his tactics. He suddenly disappeared beneath the cradle, hushed his lullaby, and moved the rockers, slowly and quietly, back and forth, from his unseen position. After a few moments, he rose stealthily, and peered cautiously over the side of the cradle, only to be greeted by that same baby smile, and those wide-open baby eyes. Then, with a despairing glance out of the window toward the hill where the

'fellers' slid, and with tears in his blue eyes, Grover Cleveland dropped resignedly to the floor again, and resumed his monotonous rocking. There he lay, listening, sobbing and doing his duty, until relieved by an older sister who came to the rescue."

Alvah Woodworth, once proprietor of the iron foundry at Manlius, New York, has left us the story of how Grover Cleveland and the Bangs boys prepared to hail a certain glorious fourth of July. They had gathered a little wagon-load of old iron and brought it to Woodworth to be melted and molded into a cannon.

"Puffing and perspiring," he says, "they toiled along, one boy between the shafts, pulling, and the other two back of the wagon, pushing. When they had arrived opposite the village foundry, they halted. One of the boys—he was the youngest and shortest of the trio—then made it known . . . that they desired to exchange their load of old iron in return for a small cannon, which the proprietor was to make for them in time to use in their fourth of July celebration.

"The foundryman weighed up the iron and found that there was not a sufficient quantity to pay for the job. This rather staggered the boys for a moment, but their spokesman [Grover Cleveland], who seemed to be a lad of resources, soon found a way out of the difficulty. His proposition was that the foundryman should go ahead and make the cannon, and after the arduous work of the fourth was disposed of he and his fellow patriots would drag up another load of iron to square up accounts. The proprietor of the foundry looked the boys over keenly and decided he could trust them. So the cannon was made and used and, true to their word, the boys delivered to the foundryman a second load of old iron as payment for the balance they owed him."



That this was done promptly we can infer from Grover's appreciation of the value of time, as shown by an essay which he wrote at the age of nine:

Fayetteville Academy *Sept. 5, 1846.*

*Time.*

Time is divided into seconds—minutes, hours, days, weeks month years and centurys. If we expect to become great and good men and be respected and esteemed by our friends we must inprove our time when we are young. George Washington inproved his time when he was a boy and he was not sorry when he was at the head of a large army fighting for his country. A great meny of our great men wer poor and had smal means of obtaining an education but by improving their time when they were young and in school they obtained their high standing Jackson was a poor boy but he was placed in school and by improving his time he found himself a president of the United States guiding and directing a powerful nation. If we wish to become great and usful in the world we must improve our time in school.

S. G. CLEVELAND.

That the atmosphere of Fayetteville did not always breed progressive and enlightened citizens is abundantly demonstrated by a letter which President Cleveland received, two years after he entered the White House:

*March 22, 1887.*

Grover Cleveland

Washington

D C

DEAR GROVER

Hank Stebbins told me the other day that you was elected president I just couldnt believe it—I often won-

derd whare you was—I haint herd of you for years . . . I have got a good job . . . here but I would like to live in Washington—Can you give me a job there for the sake of old times—Sallie Hornakers is dead had a rising. Please rite to your old friend and schoolmate.

For nine years Richard Cleveland served the people of Fayetteville as pastor. Then his health began to fail, and the strain of sustaining so large a family upon so meager a salary was heavy. When, therefore, the American Home Missionary Society offered him an agency with a salary of \$1000 a year, he accepted the appointment, which involved a change of residence to Clinton, N. Y. The move was made in 1851, when Stephen Grover was fourteen years of age, but he always remembered with pleasure those youthful days at Fayetteville. In after years, as President of the United States, he returned for a flying visit, and his brief speech is one of the few autobiographical touches that he left among his papers.

“As I find myself once more in this pretty village,” he said, “the sports and pastimes of my youth come back to my mind. I take warm interest in being with you once more. Some of you more than forty years ago were my schoolfellows and playmates. I can recall the faces of some that are now no more.

“I have been reminded to-day by an old resident of the many deaths which occurred among those I knew since I took my departure from you, and I was astonished to find that I could remember so many of the old names in driving from the foot of the street to the parsonage and the academy. There were Cobb, Parker, Gillett, McVicker, Worden, Palmer, Horner, Edwards, Noble, Deacon Flint, and many others. I recall old Green Lake and the fish I tried to catch and never did, and the tra-



ditional panther on its shores which used to shorten my excursions thitherward. I've heard so much howling in the past two years that I don't think I should be frightened by the panther now.

"If some of the old householders were here I could tell them who it was that used to take off their front gates. I mention this because I have been accused of so many worse crimes since I have been in Washington that I consider taking off gates something of a virtue.

"I would be sadly at fault if I failed to recall the many inestimable benefits I received at your hands—my early education, the training of the Sunday school, the religious advantages, the advantages of your social life. These are things which have gone with me in every step in life. And so, when in short intervals of freedom from the cares and duties of my office, my mind revels in retrospection, these early recollections are the truest, pleasantest, and brightest spots on which my memory lights.

"And so, you see, I have taken you and your village with me, and whether you are willing or not, I have made you a part of this administration. I have been a sad truant, but, now that you have seen me, keep your eyes ever upon me as I strive to do my duty in behalf of the people of this country. And it shall be my desire so to act that I may receive the approbation of these, my oldest and best friends."

At Clinton the Cleveland children enjoyed educational advantages far superior to those of Fayetteville, and the atmosphere of Hamilton College fostered in Grover the ambition already created by the influence of a scholarly father and a mother wise enough to understand the supreme advantages of a thorough intellectual training. But his brief sojourn here failed to develop in him any unusual scholarly gifts. As a student he did not shine.

The wonderful powers of application and concentration which later distinguished him were not yet apparent. He made friends more effectively than grades, and his friendships lasted.

He has himself left us an account of his Clinton days:

"It was here, in the school at the foot of College Hill, that I began my preparation for college life and enjoyed the anticipation of a collegiate education. We had two teachers in our school. One became afterward a judge in Chicago, and the other passed through the legal profession to the ministry, and within the last two years was living farther West.

"I read a little Latin with two other boys in the class. I think I floundered through four books of the *Æneid*. The other boys had nice large modern editions of Virgil, with big print and plenty of notes to help one over the hard places. Mine was a little old-fashioned copy which my father used before me, with no notes, and which was only translated by hard knocks. I believe I have forgiven those other boys for their persistent refusal to allow me the use of the notes in their books. At any rate, they do not seem to have been overtaken by any dire retribution, for one of them is now a rich and prosperous lawyer in Buffalo, and the other is a professor in your college and the orator of to-day's celebration. The struggles with ten lines of Virgil, which at first made up my daily task, are amusing as remembered now; but with them I am also forced to remember, that, instead of being the beginning of the higher education for which I honestly longed, they occurred near the end of my school advantages. This suggests a disappointment which no lapse of time can alleviate, and a deprivation I have sadly felt with every passing year. . . .

"I don't know that I should indulge further recollec-



tions that must seem very little like centennial history; but I want to establish as well as I can my right to be here. I might speak of the college faculty, who cast such a pleasing though sober shade of dignity over the place, and who, with other educated and substantial citizens, made up the best of social life. I was a boy then, and slightly felt the atmosphere of this condition; but, notwithstanding, I believe I absorbed a lasting appreciation of the intelligence and refinement which made this a delightful home.

"I know that you will bear with me, my friends, if I yield to the impulse which the mention of home creates, and speak of my own home here, and how through the memories which cluster about it I may claim a tender relationship to your village. Here it was that our family circle entire, parents and children, lived day after day in loving and affectionate converse; and here, for the last time, we met around the family altar and thanked God that our household was unbroken by death or separation. We never met together in any other home after leaving this, and Death followed closely our departure.

"And thus it is that, as with advancing years I survey the havoc Death has made, and as the thoughts of my early home become more sacred, the remembrance of this pleasant spot, so related, is revived and chastened."

Hamilton College was the Mecca of his dreams. His brother, William, was already nearing the end of his course, and Grover's turn was soon to come. But necessity is a stern master, and at this point it took control. The imperative need of relief for the hard-pressed family treasury sent Grover back to Fayetteville to work in a village store. Here he made himself useful in various ways, receiving in return a salary of fifty dollars for the

first year, and one hundred for the second, with board and lodging furnished without charge.

Life in a western New York village in those days partook somewhat of the conditions of the frontier. Comforts were few, and of these still fewer fell to the lot of John McVicar's clerks. But the boys gave little thought to their physical surroundings. From the pen of his fellow clerk, F. G. Tibbitts, we have this picture of their daily life:

"It was our duty to wait on customers, sweep and clean up, open and close the place, run errands, and do a turn for neighbors at odd times. . . . Our room was . . . a large, unfurnished room. The bed was a plain, pine one, with cords upon which to lay the tick. . . . In that room, without carpet, without wall paper, without pictures, bare, drear, and desolate, we two lived together one whole year. In the winter we fairly froze sometimes. There was no stove in the room, heat coming up from a pipe leading from the store below. . . . Grover used to rise, in those days, at about five o'clock in the summer and half-past five in the winter. He would go out to an old green pump that then stood in the square, used for watering horses, and make his morning toilet in the trough; then back to the store; open up; sweep out; build the fire; dust up; lay out the goods. By and by, about seven o'clock, along would come Mr. McVicar."

At the end of two years Grover returned to Clinton to continue his preparation for entering college; but his plans were soon again swept aside by the ruthless hand of fate. His father, whose health was still failing, shortly resigned his too arduous post at Clinton to accept a rural pastorate at Holland Patent, near Utica.

The move was made in the autumn of 1853, the last earthly autumn for that devoted servant of God. Three



Sundays he preached to his new congregation, and then death came suddenly. He was only forty-nine, poor in the goods of this world, but rich in a record of noble and unselfish service.

The tidings reached Grover through the voice of a newsboy crying papers in the street. He had driven to Utica with his sister, Mary, who was preparing for her wedding to Mr. M. E. Hoyt, and wished to make some purchases. As he sat in the carriage waiting, the cry reached him. His father had died only a few moments after his departure from Holland Patent.

This sudden and untimely death changed Grover's entire outlook. He was now sixteen years old, and abundantly supplied with brothers and sisters. Otherwise, he had inherited only the world to live in, and immediate self-support was imperative. He therefore sought a position and soon found one in the New York Institute for the Blind. But a single year having convinced him that such a life was not for him, he returned to Holland Patent, and patiently canvassed the neighborhood for employment with a future.

Disappointment followed. There seemed no satisfactory opening in that general region, and reluctantly he was forced to consider some other locality. In those days the trade winds blew steadily in one direction for young men of ambition and scant means, and Grover at last decided to go West. His earnings had been generously placed in the family sinking fund, which had sunk so low that he was compelled to borrow twenty-five dollars to pay the expense of his intended journey. For this he gave a personal note, promising to pay when convenient. Twelve years later he sent to his benefactor the following letter :

MY DEAR MR. TOWNSEND:

I am now in condition to pay my note which you hold given for money borrowed some years ago. I suppose I might have paid it long before, but I have never thought you were in need of it, and I had other purposes for my money. I have forgotten the date of the note. If you will send me it I will mail you the principal and interest. The loan you made me was my start in life, and I shall always preserve the note as an interesting reminder of your kindness. Let me hear from you soon. With many kind wishes to Mrs. Townsend and your family, I am yours, very respectfully,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

The town of Cleveland, Ohio, was his intended destination, the name, given in honor of his kinsman, General Moses Cleveland, seeming to him a good omen. But at Buffalo fate again intervened, this time in the person of his uncle, Lewis Allen, a well-known shorthorn cattle breeder, whose home was at Black Rock, on the outskirts of the city. Having stopped here for a brief visit, the traveler was persuaded to accept an offer of work on Mr. Allen's herd book, which netted him sixty dollars in cash, and deprived Ohio of another President of the United States; for Buffalo became henceforth his home.

His life in the Allen household was pleasant, even luxurious, and his earnings sufficient for his personal needs. But, although circumstances had forced him to abandon all idea of a college training, he was still resolved, with a resolution singularly like the law of the Medes and Persians "which altereth not," to study law.

Mr. Allen easily secured for him a clerkship in the firm of Rogers, Bowen and Rogers, whose senior member had a very simple theory of education: "If a boy has



brains he will find out for himself without any telling." Grover Cleveland was accordingly given a table, a shelf of law books, and permission to study law, in so far as that occupation did not interfere with his clerical duties.

His own account of his persistent struggle for education is characteristically direct and impersonal:

"I know a young man who, when quite young, determined to acquire a college education and enter the legal profession.

"The door to a college education was inexorably closed against him.

"He at once set his heart on studying law without collegiate training. When it soon appeared that even this must be postponed, he quite cheerfully set about finding any kind of honest work.

"After an unsuccessful quest for employment near home, he started for the West. He had adversity in abundance.

"He had plenty of willingness to work, plenty of faith and a fair stock of perseverance in reserve. He had no misgivings.

"After securing a temporary job, he was handed Blackstone's Commentaries and turned loose to browse in the library of a law office.

"When, on the first day of his study, all the partners and clerks forgot he was in a corner of the library and locked him in during the dinner hour he merely said to himself, 'Some day I will be better remembered.'

"He actually enjoyed his adversities.

"Even then he was called stubborn. After he had become President of the United States he was still called stubborn, and he is accused of stubbornness to this very day."

His independence of character, to use a somewhat

milder term, was conspicuously displayed in 1856, in connection with the first Presidential candidate upon the ticket called Republican by its friends, and black Republican by its enemies. Grover's host and relative, who had been a Whig, became Chairman of the Republican County Committee; but his young kinsman chose the Democratic party because, as he later explained, it seemed to him to represent greater solidarity and conservatism. He was repelled by the Frémont candidacy, which struck him as "having a good deal of fuss and feathers about it."

Being only nineteen years of age, he could not vote, but he could work. And so began the record of party service which characterized him throughout life, save when, as President, he turned aside from party to become the representative of all the people.

Four years of study prepared him for admission to the New York bar and four years more he remained with the firm of Rogers, Bowen, and Rogers as managing clerk. This congenial post he vacated in 1863, to accept a call to public service, his colleagues of the Buffalo bar having without his solicitation fixed upon him as the best available man for Assistant District Attorney of Erie County. The District Attorney and Cleveland's chief, C. C. Torrance, was in failing health, and more and more the burdens of the office fell to the young assistant. These he bore without shrinking, and by them proved his capacity for hard work, his legal skill, and his strength of character.

He won the confidence of judge and juries alike by his open, fair-minded approach to all questions, by his painstaking mastery of the facts in each case, and by his sturdy common sense. He allowed no case to come to trial until he had made conscientious preparation, and frequently he spent the whole night writing out his argu-



ment, and committing it to memory. His power of endurance was phenomenal, his memory no less so.

This office gave him valuable experience and at the same time enabled him to continue to meet the obligation, which he rejoiced to acknowledge, of giving financial aid to his mother. It was this obligation which caused him to remain out of service when Lincoln's call for troops went forth, and to avail himself of the legal right to hire a substitute when he was drafted, a course which later caused him no little embarrassment during excited political campaigns.

To those who watched his work as Assistant District Attorney Cleveland's devotion to duty was fully apparent. He met his obligations so fully and effectively that, when the elections of 1865 approached, he was the natural and inevitable choice of the Democrats for the office of District Attorney. Again the nomination was made without his solicitation, and apparently even without his knowledge. He was defeated by the Republican candidate, his intimate friend, Lyman K. Bass, and at once resumed his law practice, not as clerk now, but as partner of former State Treasurer Major Isaac K. Vanderpoel. In 1869, Vanderpoel resigned and the firm became Lanning, Cleveland, and Folsom.

Grover Cleveland was now twenty-eight years of age, with a variety of experiences to his credit. He had missed the college education which he had coveted, but in its place he had learned the lessons of that more exacting taskmaster, human experience. The returns from the firm were not large, but his tastes were simple, and wealth, "a superfluity of the things one does not want," as Lincoln defined it, was never his goal.

His attitude toward life was fairly represented by a quaint illuminated motto which hung over his bed in his

sleeping room above his law office. It represented the allegorical figures of Life, Duty, and Death, underneath which was inscribed the motto: "As thy days are, so shall thy strength be." "If I have any coat of arms and emblem," he once remarked to a friend, "it is that. It is a motto I chose years ago and I devised that form to keep it with me."

He was content with his simple apartment, his group of intimates at "Dutchman's," or some other favorite resort, and he dreamed of a future of law practice, with a possible judgeship at the end of a long vista. With this goal in mind, he declined the flattering offer of the Assistant District Attorneyship for the Northern District of New York, with its prestige and promise of quick advancement, feeling that he had already spent too much time on side issues, if he was to grow into a real jurist.

But a crisis was approaching. In 1870 the Democrats of Erie County faced an important local election, with a normally large Republican majority to be overcome. Cleveland was popular, and had recently made a strong race for District Attorney. On the day before the convention, therefore, he was offered the nomination for the lucrative office of Sheriff. Such a suggestion had never entered his mind, and at first it made no strong appeal to him. He therefore declined it. But the Democratic leaders were persistent, his sense of party obligation was strong, and the financial rewards in the event of victory were enticingly large. He therefore consented to reconsider.

"I know," he said to William Dorsheimer, whose advice he was asking, "that it is not usual for lawyers to be sheriffs. . . . But there are some reasons why I should consider the matter carefully. I have been compelled to earn my living since I was seventeen. I have never



had time for reading, nor for thorough professional study. The sheriff's office would take me out of practice, but it would keep me about the courts, and in professional relations. It would give me considerable leisure, which I could devote to self-improvement. Besides, it would enable me to save a modest competency, and give me the pecuniary independence which otherwise I may never have. I have come for your advice. What would you do in my place?"

Dorsheimer's counsel confirmed his own deliberate judgment, and he accepted the nomination. His county, normally Republican, gave him a majority of a hundred votes, and at once he became the hope, and soon the despair, of the hungry pack of Democratic politicians bent on gain. For years they had watched the Republicans fatten on the spoils which went with this office. Their day had come at last. A Democrat was Sheriff of Erie County.

But it was not long before the politicians began to understand just what they had accomplished in persuading Grover Cleveland to enter politics. To their consternation, they found that only one type of contractor could win the favor of the new Sheriff, namely, he whose bid was lowest. Generous as he was with his own money, he was exasperatingly careful with the money of the people whose faith had elevated him to office. He believed in business methods for public offices, and ruthlessly applied the principle to the one under his charge.

He soon discovered, by the use of his own tape line, that the contractor who furnished wood for the county jail was giving short measure, and at once a new contractor was found, and the activities of the former one limited to the task of making good his deficiencies. A crooked miller shortly received similar attentions, and

other dishonest contractors in turn faced an unexpected reckoning.

When, at the end of his term, he retired, he went out of office with a very large augmentation of the reputation for honesty and fearlessness which had secured his nomination. He had held an office of unsavory traditions and supremely unpleasant duties, and had held it against the grafters of his own party.

The next eight years saw Grover Cleveland again at the practice of the law. To the miscellaneous business which came to his firm, Bass, Cleveland, and Bissell (later Cleveland and Bissell), he devoted all of his vast energy, as of old working time and again all night over a case.

John G. Milburn, one of his lifelong friends, gives an attractive picture of Mr. Cleveland at this time:

"He was an outstanding lawyer at the Buffalo bar, but with a distinctly local reputation and acquaintance. . . . He was a prominent citizen, deeply respected for his independence, force of character, and inbred integrity. He was genial and companionable, with his intimacies mainly among men. . . . He was more inclined to circumscribe his professional work than to extend it; but he did his work with an extraordinary thoroughness. That thoroughness was a specific characteristic. He gave his best to everything he did. I have known him, when engaged in the trial of an important case, to work on it all through the night and resume the trial the next morning, after a cold bath and breakfast, as fresh as if he had had a long night's sleep. His physical endurance was extraordinary, beyond anything I have ever known. He would subject himself to enormous strains of work and I never heard him complain of fatigue. . . . His commanding qualities were those of judgment, earnestness, and moral force, lightened by a keen sense of humor. At



the bar and among men they gave him a marked and powerful position and influence. He was recognized on all sides as a power in the community, which would be more and more visible as some emergency arose bringing it into full play. That is the man as I saw him in 1881."

It was during this period that Mr. Chauncey M. Depew, then President of the New York Central Railroad, offered him the attorneyship of the company in western New York, which would have brought him in a salary of some fifteen thousand dollars, while permitting him to retain his personal practice. Mr. Cleveland answered that he had set the limit to the work he could do satisfactorily to himself, that he was making ten thousand a year, which, with the income from what he had saved, was ample for his needs, and that no addition to that income could induce him to change his plans or assume new personal obligations.

He loved to do his work at his own convenience, and was satisfied with existing conditions. But his reputation as a fearless and able public servant had already spread to the camp of the reformers, and the hour was approaching when he would again be called to leave his private pursuits and take up the duties of a still more important office in the service of the people. Although far from suspecting it, he was upon the threshold of a great career, reached with unprecedented suddenness: for within four years he was to be, in quick succession, Mayor of Buffalo, Governor of New York, and President of the United States.

## CHAPTER II

### THE VETO MAYOR

*"Unswerving loyalty to duty, constant devotion to truth, and a clear conscience will overcome every discouragement and surely lead the way to usefulness and high achievement."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

IN 1881, a ring composed of members of both political parties was in control of the Board of Aldermen of Buffalo, and their works of corruption were a scandal to honest men. Leading members of both parties, determined upon reform, therefore consulted together. It was evident that to form a third party was to court certain defeat, and that to attempt to break into the Republican Convention and force the nomination of a reform candidate was equally futile. The Republicans being entrenched, the only hope of dislodging the bi-party ring which was working through them was to force the nomination of a reform mayor upon the Democratic Convention. And so they turned to the office of Cleveland and Bissell and offered to Grover Cleveland the Democratic nomination for Mayor of Buffalo.

Pointing to his paper-laden table and asking his visitors to look at the interests he represented, the trusts that had been reposed in him, Mr. Cleveland declined the offer. Balked for the moment, but not wholly discouraged, the reformers faced the convention, which proceeded to make its nominations. Through their effort, the head of the ticket was left undetermined, in the hope that Mr. Cleveland might be prevailed upon to recon-



sider. When the ticket, in this incomplete form, was shown to him with the suggestion that the vacant line was for his name, he scanned it critically and announced that he would accept if the name of John C. Sheehan, for Comptroller, were removed.

This was an astounding proposition, for Sheehan was the political boss of the convention. It was, however, an ultimatum, and Cleveland's name was an essential factor in the plans of the reformers. The ring-rule sympathizers, too, were not averse to his nomination, which they felt would soothe the reform element and, by a defeat, convince them of their helplessness. So Sheehan retired, Grover Cleveland was nominated by acclamation, and the Independents, who had formed a temporary political organization of their own, at once endorsed him.

The nomination settled, Mr. Cleveland astonished both friend and foe by declaring that he knew the politicians had consented to his nomination because they counted confidently upon his defeat, but that he intended to be elected. If elected, he further assured them, with the memory of Samuel J. Tilden and the presidential election of 1876 in mind, he would not be counted out.

His formal letter of acceptance was in the frank and simple style with which America and the world later became so familiar. He did not seek for new and striking phrases, nor did he pretend that he could bring to the problems of the office an unexampled wisdom, or an inspiration denied to other men. He frankly spoke old truths, and pledged his honor to them. The letter is not, and was not intended to be thought, a pathfinder, but it is a reliable introduction to the mind of an honest man, seeking to serve the people.

The keynote of this letter lies in the phrase, "Public officials are the trustees of the people." From it the

political genius of William C. Hudson later created the famous slogan, "Public office is a public trust." But though the form was Hudson's, the sentiment was Cleveland's, and by it he ever regulated the conduct of his official life, whether as Sheriff, as Mayor, as Governor, or as President.

To the confusion of the bi-party ring, Grover Cleveland was elected Mayor of Buffalo by the largest majority ever given to a candidate for that office. Although frankly proclaiming himself a Democrat, he drew from the best element of both parties, and that his victory was largely personal is shown by the fact that, at the same election, the Republican state ticket was successful in Buffalo. Without effort, and almost against his will, he secured a majority of 3,530 in a city which, two years before, had given a plurality of over three thousand to the Republican candidate for Governor, Alonzo B. Cornell.

On January 1, 1882, the new Mayor entered upon the duties of his office. He was not yet forty-five but, save for a brief period of four years between his two terms as President of the United States, his career as a lawyer was over. Henceforth he belonged to the people.

Mr. Cleveland's tasks as Mayor of Buffalo were grim tasks, made harder by the fact that the enthusiasm for reform had not been strong enough to give him a sympathetic council. To present his inaugural message to a body whom he had been chosen to chasten was a task requiring courage not only, but also a certain discretion which, with a dominant opposition, is the better part of valor. He prepared this document with extreme care, but with no desire to mask his intentions. He had been chosen in the interest of civic reform, and he frankly declared his purpose of instituting civic reform. With



the certain touch of the man who knows his facts, he pointed out specific abuses, assuring his unappreciative hearers that:

“We hold the money of the people in our hands, to be used for their purposes and to further their interests as members of the municipality, and it is quite apparent that, when any part of the funds which the taxpayers have thus intrusted to us are diverted to other purposes, or when, by design or neglect, we allow a greater sum to be applied to any municipal purpose than is necessary, we have, to that extent, violated our duty. There surely is no difference in his duties and obligations, whether a person is intrusted with the money of one man or many. . . .”

And Mayor Cleveland was not content to express his convictions by words alone. His commission from the people was not to change the ethical standards of his colleagues in the government, but to alter their practices. From theory, therefore, he turned to action.

Concerning the street department, he reported to the council, most of whom needed no information upon the subject: “Investigation . . . has developed the most shameful neglect of duty. . . . The mismanagement of affairs of this department has led directly to the wasting (to use no stronger term) of the people’s money.” And he followed the general statement by a shocking bill of particulars.

So clear was his meaning, so certain to catch the ear and arouse the enthusiasm of a machine-ridden people, that his opponents, at this point, attempted to prevent the reading of the message. But he could neither be checked nor diverted by discourtesy from the course which seemed to him plain duty: to state his views and purposes to the men upon whom rested, conjointly with himself, the

responsibility for legislation, the duty of reform. The message was the challenge, and the reply came soon.

The charter of the city of Buffalo made provision that the Common Council should select one daily newspaper as the official organ, and pay it a subsidy for publishing the proceedings of the Council; and the action of the Council, in this matter, was expressly exempted from the operation of the Mayor's veto. In his message, Mayor Cleveland had specifically referred to this fact, but had suggested that this printing, which involved the expenditure of thousands of dollars, be given to the lowest bidder. In view of the publicity which the press gave to the message, the Council had been compelled to accept the suggestion and advertise for bids. The fact then became apparent to all, that, under the old system, the city had been paying two prices for its work, only one of which had gone to the printer. With sighs for lost spoils, the ring accepted the lowest bid, and at once devised new methods for securing new spoils.

They drew a bill providing that certain German papers should be paid for printing official digests of the proceedings of the Council. This was a plan of graft indicative of a paucity of imagination, and Mayor Cleveland, in vetoing it, exposed its too obvious fallacy. The German papers, from their desire to serve their public, he explained, "will publish a synopsis much more satisfactory to their subscribers than any which the city clerk will be apt to prepare . . . and without any compensation from the city. . . . The effect of the resolution . . . is (therefore) to give these newspapers eight hundred dollars each for doing no more than they will . . . be obliged to do without it. This comes very near being a most objectionable subsidy." This made the issue so clear



that it would have been politically unsafe to push the resolution farther, and the matter was dropped.

Mr. Cleveland's courage and the sincerity of his demands for reform were shortly again put to the test by his enemies in the Council; for the dreamers of unjust subsidies and unearned gains now knew themselves to be his enemies. He had informed the Council that "of the total deaths reported . . . thirty-six per cent . . . have been from zymotic diseases, dependent, in some degree at least, upon surrounding conditions, . . . and preventable." The Board of Health, having been commissioned to report upon the situation, declared that insufficient sewerage was the chief cause of the condition, and that it could be easily remedied by the building of an adequate system of sewers and by introducing Niagara water into every house and closing up every well. To hasten the completion of this enormous undertaking, and to make it more difficult for the ring to pass it over to favored contractors and thus rob the public treasury by needless expenditures, Mr. Cleveland suggested to the Council that as they and the city engineers were already fully occupied with their regular routine duties, the construction of the sewer should be put in the hands of a commission of citizens.

This suggestion, if adopted, meant that the finest opportunity for "graft" ever offered a Buffalo City Council would be snatched from them, and the opposition promptly opened an attack through the city engineer, who argued "in the interest of the public," that such a work, if handed over to a commission, would result in "permanent loss and injury to the records of this department." Though large, he declared, the work could be carried out quite easily, though it would be an advantage to have

added to his office "a consulting engineer of acknowledged ability in this specialty."

Here was a challenge which the Mayor met promptly and definitely. "I am utterly amazed to learn," he declared, ". . . that the job . . . is such an easy one. Every member of your honorable body knows very well that for many years the problem of . . . how the Main and Hamburg Streets canal nuisance should be abated has occupied . . . the attention of our city officials. I find in the Council proceedings of eleven years ago that this canal was declared a great nuisance. . . . The actual result of all their endeavors to master this easy subject has been the establishment of a wheel in the water adjoining the canal." He further showed that the very city engineer who was insisting upon his right to do this large and important work had allowed four months to pass without so much as a report of progress concerning a similar though smaller problem which had recently been referred to him. Upon which task, he scornfully declared, "not a stroke of real work has yet been done, and yet there seems to have been considerable skillful engineering talent employed, at quite an expense. . . . Either the work has not been easy or considerable money has been wasted."

Having presented these facts, and confident in the strength of public support, Cleveland was ready for a trial of strength; but the Council, while still determined to keep the work within its own control, preferred the safer methods of indirection. They prepared a bill providing for a commission, but one so shorn of power as to leave the way open to the control which they desired. Mayor Cleveland promptly recognized the strategy and blocked it. The Council was forced to yield and a commission was formed, on the lines desired by the Mayor.



Mr. Cleveland next presented his nominations for the commission. The Council rejected them, but the determination of the honest Mayor was even stronger than that of the would-be grafters. Moreover, Mr. Cleveland had recently held them up to the scorn and contempt of the city and they feared to push him to such lengths so soon again. Having discovered a shameful scheme to assign the street-cleaning contract to one George Talbot at figures calculated to throw a small fortune into his hands, the Mayor had intervened and forced the Council to award it to the lowest bidder. He thus, at one stroke, saved the city over one hundred thousand dollars and attracted national attention by a veto message describing the intended deal as "a most barefaced, impudent, and shameless scheme to betray the interests of the people." When, therefore, he resubmitted the names for his commission with the comment that "their rejection . . . was the result of haste and confusion," the Council, having found their master, instantly confirmed them.

It is a matter of little permanent importance that the new commission did the work promptly and upon reasonable terms. But it is of wide significance that, as Mayor of Buffalo, Grover Cleveland accomplished, in the face of entrenched selfishness, the reforms for which the people had been vainly calling, and that before the end of his strenuous term of office, he was beginning to be thought of as the type of man for a reform governor of New York. It is also of general significance that these experiences, multiplied many times over, made of him a reformer in root and branch. They caused him fully to realize the insidious dangers which ever beset popular government, and to set his face still more uncompromisingly toward reform.

Each bill presented to him received his patient study

and not one veto was ever issued unadvisedly. His carefully written arguments were constructive rather than destructive, aiming at the creation of a system which would stop the abuses which he saw so clearly and pointed out so fearlessly. Over and over again they contain fundamental discussions of public morality. He spoke not as a mayor dealing with the comparatively insignificant interests of a small city, but as a statesman enunciating the great principles upon which free government rests. And so his vetoes, while gaining for him each day a more bitter enmity from the political boss and the would-be grafter, steadily raised him in the respect of honest men.

In spite of his firmness, however, in spite of the consuming heat of his wrath when once aroused, he was in general considerate in his dealings with his Council, and often, in the more difficult problems which came before him, he showed the depth of his human sympathy. Those unfortunate little ones, the children of the streets, were his especial care, and found in him a watchful and resourceful friend. He also insisted that the poorer quarters of the city should have every possible protection and advantage.

In the summer of 1882, he received a resolution of the Council directing the street commissioner to replace a pump which, in the interest of public health, had been removed. His veto message breathes scorn and contempt for the authors of the measure. "The particular well," he declared, ". . . stands third in the list as to the extent of contamination. . . . If there is in the mind of anyone the idea that it is not necessary to supply the poor and laboring people in the vicinity of this well with water as pure and healthful as that furnished to their richer and more pretentious fellow citizens, I desire to say that



I have no sympathy with such a notion. On the contrary, I believe that the poor who toil should of all others have access to what nature intended for their refreshment—wholesome and pure water.”

In all these conflicts the Mayor, while almost uniformly victorious, never developed the executive bacillus of personal egotism, or the pretense of phenomenal wisdom. His messages continued to be simple, straightforward statements of facts verified by careful study, and citations of laws quoted with meticulous exactness. When found in error, he willingly admitted the fact, but he never allowed such admissions to cause him to distrust his own judgment in matters concerning which he had not been shown to be wrong.

The telling title of “Veto Mayor” was won by his policy of pinning the crime upon the criminal. Deliberate dishonesty, according to his practical philosophy, is not to be regarded in the abstract. Wherever it exists, it is distinctly personal, and public duty requires that it be dealt with in terms of individuals. His strong and fearless pronouncements were like blasts of a trumpet of the age of heroes, and were the more effective because it was a matter of record that his words were but the precursors of actions even more fearless.

It is said of Napoleon that at the bridge of Lodi he suddenly saw himself for the first time a possible world figure. In Albany, in the once locally famous Flanagan murder case, according to the interpretation of Buffalo contemporaries, Mayor Cleveland first realized that there might be for him a larger career than that of provincial mayor or district lawyer. The case itself is of no more importance than thousands of cases which crowd the books of our criminal courts.

In 1880 Martin Flanagan killed John Cairns, fore-

man in a grain elevator in which Flanagan was employed. The case was tried and Flanagan was sentenced to death for murder in the first degree. Appeals to the Superior Court of Buffalo, and later to the Court of Appeals, confirmed the verdict. As the date set for the execution approached, the case became the subject of conversation at the corner table in the Tifft House, where Mr. Cleveland ordinarily lunched with a body of close friends. In his absence, the company decided that Flanagan had not had a fair trial and agreed to wait upon Mayor Cleveland and ask him to procure from Governor Cornell a stay of execution, in order that the facts in the case might be again examined. The stay was granted, and Mayor Cleveland reviewed the case himself, discovering evidence which convinced him that Flanagan ought not to be executed.

He found, according to Judge Locke, who was associated with the reopening of the case, that "one of Flanagan's counsel, the one who could plead, had been so drunk during the trial that the other, who could not plead, had been compelled to sum up without notice." It appeared also that Flanagan "had killed his man with a short-bladed barlow knife which no one would have supposed a deadly weapon. He stabbed, furthermore, in the right side, ignorant of the fact that his antagonist had a displaced heart, which was thus pierced." These facts established, Mr. Cleveland's duty was plain. He must go to Albany, appear before the Governor, and plead for the life of the doomed man.

The trip was planned in consultation with the men who had first approached him in the matter. Mr. John Allen, a director of the New York Central Railroad, and a frequenter of the corner table at the Tifft House, arranged for a special car into which were bundled most



of the jurymen who had convicted Flanagan, a body of witnesses, packages of affidavits, the District Attorney, and a number of citizens who had aided the Mayor in preparing his case. Mr. Cleveland's methods were always thorough, and in this case they had been particularly so, for a human life depended upon his efforts.

The Governor received them in the Executive Chamber, with the unencouraging courtesy of a man whose boast it was that he seldom used his power of pardon. Mr. Cleveland opened the hearing with a carefully prepared statement of the facts and circumstances of the crime, together with a review of the trial, pointing out his reasons for questioning the justice of the verdict. The Governor appeared little impressed. Affidavits, letters, papers, recommendations from the jurors followed. Still the Governor remained unresponsive. The District Attorney, Mr. Edward W. Hatch, was then called upon by the Governor for a summary of the facts of the case as revealed by the evidence at the trial. Mr. Hatch declared that the evidence had justified the verdict, and that the appeals which had been taken had revealed no errors.

At this point, Governor Cornell considered that enough had been said, and declined to listen to an additional plea of Mr. Box of Buffalo. His refusal was so peremptory that Box dared not further insist upon his right to speak, but Mayor Cleveland sprang to his feet and faced the Governor with the words: "We come to you as to a king, pleading for mercy. It is your duty to hear us to the end." And Governor Cornell did hear him to the end, and the end was a commutation of the sentence of the doomed man.

In conversation with a friend, some months later, the Governor remarked: "There is a remarkable man in Buffalo. . . . His name is Cleveland, and although he

is Mayor of the city, he recently came to see me in a legal capacity on behalf of a convicted murderer, under sentence of death. His appeal to me for executive clemency was totally unlike any I heretofore have received. It was without sentiment. It was a cold, dispassionate presentation of the unfortunate circumstances under which the killing was done, the provocation, and the shadow of presumptive justification for the act. . . . I was so impressed with the sincerity and the legal cocksureness of the man that I commuted the sentence."

Grover Cleveland who, as Sheriff of Erie County, had with his own hands hanged a malefactor rather than put upon the shoulders of another a responsibility which belonged to his office, thus saved another unfortunate from the same fate, because he believed the sentence to be unjust. In his effort to secure the ends of justice, he matched his will, his brain, and his legal skill against a man of great power and reputed ability, and carried his point. He had come to the bridge of Lodi, and the days of his greatness were not far off. The next time he entered that Executive Chamber, it was as Governor of New York.



## CHAPTER III

### THE REFORM GOVERNOR

*"Let us look for guidance to the principles of true Democracy, which are enduring because they are right, and invincible because they are just."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

AS Mayor of Buffalo, Grover Cleveland had accomplished definite results. He had fought a winning battle for the people against entrenched crookedness, against a "gang" which a Republican daily, the *Express*, described as "the most corrupt combination ever formed in the Council." And so successfully had he fought that, at the end of his strenuous term, he was in the minds of local reform leaders as a candidate for Governor of New York.

Among his fellows he was reckoned "a good fellow," which meant that he lived as they lived, a life by no means saintly, but irreproachably honest, and in general commendable. He drank a little, but not to excess. He played poker, but only for sums so small as to involve no hardship either to winner or to loser. His profession was always his chief interest and he was known in the Buffalo district as a man of parts, who could be trusted to serve the people tirelessly and fearlessly, and without raising, even in his own mind, the question, "Will it pay *me*?"

Outside the Buffalo district, the public as yet knew little of him, save as the ringing words of his more important vetoes had gained a wider currency, by their

appeal to virile, courageous, fighting manhood. To those familiar with the politics of New York State at that period it was evident that there at least the great Republican experiment needed a leader built on the lines of a man of war, and on September 20, 1882, that need was emphasized anew by the nomination of Charles J. Folger as Republican candidate for Governor of New York. The announcement of this nomination was received with an outburst of indignation by the reform element of both parties. Henry Ward Beecher, in words which reached every corner of the land, declared that it had been achieved by bribery and forgery, and added the opinion that the machine "should be rebuked in a manner it cannot fail to understand."

Folger himself was regarded as a gentleman of high character and exemplary life, but it was felt that he had been chosen for the Republicans and not by them. Only a few months before the nomination, President Arthur had taken him from the bench of the New York Court of Appeals and had made him Secretary of the Treasury with the purpose, so his enemies believed, of using him to prevent the renomination of Governor Cornell. At the psychological moment, a telegram from Washington had made him the Administration candidate. In his interest, delegates had been coerced, efficient public servants had been removed to be replaced by the President's partisans, and about the patronage-packed convention had hovered the agents of Jay Gould, laying plans for special privileges. By such methods, as one of the New York City Republican journals complained, "the wishes of 450,000 Republicans were overridden by the will of Chester A. Arthur, accidental President by the grace of Guiteau's bullet."

In view of these facts, the followers of the uncertain



presidential dreams of James G. Blaine saw in Folger's nomination a plan to defeat their "peerless leader" in the next presidential campaign, and watched with eager expectancy the preparations for the Democratic State Convention which should select Folger's antagonist.

Early in the summer of 1882, Mr. Cleveland received news of the illness of his mother, and departed at once for Holland Patent. During his prolonged absence his friends in Buffalo quietly launched a movement for his nomination as Democratic candidate for Governor. In his own district the suggestion met with instant favor, and from the first it was evident that the sixty delegates of his judicial district could be counted on to support him in the convention. Reports were sent to him from time to time, but he gave them little attention. His mother was dying, and all his thought was for her.

"During those last sad days of waiting," writes one who spent them with him, "no one would have supposed that any political ambitions were in his mind. Never once, during the last two weeks of her illness, did he leave the home town; and when the many letters and telegrams arrived, he answered them with no apparent concern, so that even the family group were not aware of the possibilities that lay so definitely before him."

On July 19th his mother died, with her seven surviving children about her. She was buried beside her husband, and Grover Cleveland returned to his official duties with a remark about "the desolation of a life without a mother's prayers."

Arrived in Buffalo, he found the movement for his nomination well advanced and superbly organized. At first he took little interest, though he did not discourage the movement, as he was a candidate for a place on the Supreme Bench of his district, and the prominent men-

tion of his name in connection with the governorship would further this ambition. He was, therefore, content that his friends should continue their work.

As he watched their progress, he slowly became more interested. "I am not actively seeking the nomination for Governor," . . . he wrote to Edgar P. Apgar, who had urged him to visit Dan Manning, master of the well-oiled Democratic machine at Albany, and heir to the methods of the Albany Regency. "I know that neither my acquaintance in political circles throughout the state, nor my standing in the state Democracy, would for a moment suggest my name . . . and if it were not for my abiding faith in the success of an honest effort to perform public duty, I should at times distrust my ability to properly bear the responsibilities of the place in case of election.

"I am entirely certain, that if there is anything of my candidacy, it rests upon the fact that my location, and an entire freedom from the influence of all and any kind of factional disturbance, might make me an available candidate. If my name is presented to the Convention, I should think it would be presented upon that theory. And I am sure, if I were nominated, and could be the instrument of bringing about the united action of the party at the polls, I should feel that I had been of great value to the people and to the party.

"When an interview with Mr. Manning was first suggested, some time ago, my impulse was at once to find my way to him by way of showing my respect for his position in the party, and the regard I have learned to entertain for him as a gentleman. Upon reflection, however, it has occurred to me that if we meet by appointment, it will of course be known that we have been together, and it will not the less surely be falsely *alleged*, that an understanding has been arrived at between us, and pledges



made which make me his man. Would not this lying interpretation be used in answer to the claim that I am free from any alliances? Might not the friends of other candidates claim that one who was proclaimed as a free candidate, and yet had an understanding with Mr. Manning or his friends, ought not to be nominated? What would be the effect of such an appeal, on the Convention, or afterwards on the election? . . .

"I ask you then . . . whether . . . the chances of an election will not be better if this visit is not made as you suggest. May I not in this way avoid even the appearance of being anything except what I really am; and may I not, thus, absolutely preclude the pretense that I am not a sound, plain, uncomplaining Democrat and an absolutely free man?"

Meanwhile his political promoters, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike, were actively seeking his nomination. In the spacious gardens of Mr. George Urban, a Republican of Buffalo, they built a log cabin, in the midst of a grove of hickories. Beside the cabin stood a concrete base for the keg of beer which in Buffalo was the inevitable concomitant of every political conference. Around this base three benches formed a triangle abutting upon a hickory, which shaded the "throne chair." On these benches beneath the emblematic trees his friends met with their chosen leader, Grover Cleveland, and with his at first reluctant co-operation, secretly planned their pre-convention campaign.

Cleveland's leadership had not come by chance. From his earliest days in Buffalo he had been active in politics, not with a view to winning office, but as a civic duty. Urban, although a Republican leader, had often employed Cleveland's talent for peacemaking, realizing that the latter was in close touch with the masses before he

began much contact with the classes, and that he easily maintained sympathetic relations with both without offense to either. When political troubles arose in the people's section, they would send for Cleveland, who "would sit down among the brothers of discontent, play with them, drink with them a while, and then peacefully settle their controversy."

By September, mysterious hints of a "dark horse" in Erie County were causing political prophets to wonder, and expectant officials, accustomed to fatten upon party spoils, to come perilously near to prayer. Grover Cleveland, enemy of the faithful spoilsmen of Buffalo, the man who had refused to pay his personal followers out of the public treasury, lived in Erie County. Could these rumors refer to him?

As the date of the convention approached, Mr. Cleveland saw clearly that his nomination was within the range of possibilities, and threw his tremendous energies into the scale. Now, for the first time, he appeared in the character of a politician seeking office; a keen, resourceful, courageous leader, cautious in counsel, a field marshal in action. Three days before the convention, he sent to Wilson S. Bissell the following orders regarding Daniel Manning.

*Sept. 19, '82,*  
1 o'clock A.M.

DEAR BISSELL:

John B. Manning has been in to see me to-night and has much to say about treachery, &c. I listened to all.

He talks Congressman at large.

I still listened.

Now do just as I tell you without asking any questions. When Dan and Scheu get there, have them go the



first thing to Dan'l Manning and urge with the *utmost vehemence* my nomination.

Never mind what he says—have them pound away.

I am quite sure he thinks these two good friends are cool and jealous and don't want to see me nominated. And I am sure he has in his head the idea of Congressman at large and I think it is based upon what he thinks as to the real feelings of some of my friends—or that we think are friends.

Of course I know how it is, but I want Manning to be convinced that he is wrong in his premises.

I heard the same old song—if I had come to see him my nomination would have been assured, &c., Flower has much money, &c. . . .

G. C.

The situation which appeared when the Democratic State Convention met at Syracuse was one requiring both skill and courage. Delegates from Tammany Hall were clamoring for seats, and their astute leader, Kelly, was looking for help. Kings County presented her candidate, General Henry W. Slocum, the choice of Tilden; Jefferson County presented hers, Roswell P. Flower, ex-Congressman and ex-Chairman of the Executive State Committee. Each claimed 156 votes out of a total of 384, thus leaving a possible 72 for the third candidate, should one venture to emerge. Between Slocum and Flower, however, there was fierce conflict, and this fact offered hope to the Cleveland minority.

In the eagerness of battle both Slocum and Flower had made what they considered satisfactory terms with Manning, whose major aim was to prevent the seating of the Tammany Hall delegates. Kelly knew this and, with the to-be-expected wisdom of the serpent, set himself the



task of outwitting them both. He contrived to convince the managers of each that the nomination of their respective candidates would be assured if only the Tammany delegates could be seated. Thus the followers of Flower and Slocum united and forced the seating of Kelly's delegation.

But when the thing was done, when the Tammany men were secure in their seats, and three ballots had failed to decide between the candidates, Kelly suddenly demanded that the Tammany delegation be called again, and upon that signal every brave voted for Grover Cleveland, amid a scene of almost unprecedented excitement. When the third ballot was finally officially registered, Grover Cleveland's nomination was beyond question. He had two hundred and eleven votes as against one hundred and fifty-six for Slocum and fifteen for Flower; and, upon motion of the leader of the Slocum men, Cleveland was generously voted to be the unanimous choice of the convention.

When the clans departed, the Flower men, the Slocum men, and the Tammany Hall braves all thought they understood what had happened. Tammany Hall had given recalcitrant Democrats a lesson in New York politics, the lesson that the Big Chief hears all, sees all, knows all. Flower and Slocum had walked with Daniel Manning, and Tammany had punished them, giving the prize to the man who, as was supposed, had not so walked.

The sequel, however, proves that even a Tammany leader in a New York State Convention, in what is considered good tiger weather, may meet his match. Grover Cleveland had made his political reputation as a reformer, but he was wise enough to know that one must reform a tiger by methods quite different from those needed for men. And so, having reconsidered the cau-

tious program outlined in his August letter to Apgar, he had come to the convention city of Syracuse itself—not openly, but in the quiet of a late evening, when even tigers were asleep. For a few brief hours he had been closeted with Manning, and had departed as unostentatiously as he had come. His work, however, had been done before his departure. Manning had not captured Grover Cleveland. Grover Cleveland had captured Manning, who remained ever after an active, consistent Cleveland man. And of this visit Tammany had no inkling.

Kelly left the Syracuse Convention serene in the thought that he had named the candidate. Manning felt confident that *he* had named him, while the knights of the hickory grove did not need to debate the question. Their task was to plan the election of an unowned candidate for Governor, the Honorable Grover Cleveland.

Cleveland's nomination was thus neither an accident nor the result of a blind partisan conflict, but a victory by intention. Manning had nominated him, but was not entitled to consider him in any sense his man. Kelly had nominated him, but with the blinders on, and could claim no proprietorship; for Grover Cleveland had kept himself free, if elected, to serve the people and to act in their interests alone, an achievement of political skill of which Thomas Jefferson might have been justly proud. He deserved, and he received, the support of the intelligent reformers who understood how profoundly reform movements need political brains in leadership and political skill in management.

The day after the ticket was chosen Mr. Cleveland wrote to David B. Hill, Mayor of Elmira, who had been nominated Lieutenant Governor: "Accept my hearty congratulations on your nomination. . . . Now let us go



to work and show the people of the state what two bachelor mayors can do."

Cleveland's letter accepting the nomination was a frank declaration of war upon such politicians as pervert to private ends the machinery designed to serve the people. It was downright, specific, Clevelandesque. It made promises which could neither be misunderstood by others nor repudiated through ingenious interpretations by himself, and it caused the 'braves' of both parties to get out their war paint and their tomahawks. They knew by his past record what his future policy was likely to prove. With Cleveland as Governor, no party affiliation would serve to shield a scoundrel.

He did not write as a man seeking the support of hungry partisans, but as one calling honest men to battle for reform. He placed himself squarely on the side of those who, throughout the nation, were working for civil service reform, and as squarely on the side of honest elections. "The expenditure of money to influence the action of people at the polls, . . ." he said, "is calculated to excite the gravest concern. When this pernicious agency is successfully employed, a representative form of government becomes a sham, and laws passed under its baleful influence cease to protect, but are made the means by which the rights of the people are sacrificed and the public treasury despoiled."

Had Grover Cleveland been a politician, with the record of a spoilsman behind him, his promises would have meant little. They might have deceived a few of the simple, disgusted a few of the honest, caused mirth to a few other spoilsmen, and thus fulfilled their intended mission; for Americans had long since learned that, as the devil can quote Scripture, so the most dangerous type of demagogue can sing of ideals in false notes not easily



distinguishable from true. But Mr. Cleveland had already put into practice the ideals which he announced, and Republicans bent on reform rallied to his support with an enthusiasm equal to that of his Democratic followers.

On the day of the election, as he sat in his office thinking of the responsibilities soon to be his, he wrote to his brother, the Rev. William N. Cleveland, a letter which reveals at once his simplicity, his modesty, and his essentially religious point of view:

Mayor's Office, Buffalo, N. Y.

*November 7, 1882.*

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I have just voted. I sit here in the Mayor's office alone, with the exception of an artist from Frank Leslie's newspaper, who is sketching the office. If mother were here I should be writing to her, and I feel as if it were time to write to someone who will believe what I write.

I have been for some time in the atmosphere of certain success, so that I have been sure that I should assume the duties of the high office for which I have been named. I have tried hard in the light of this fact to properly appreciate the responsibilities that will rest upon me, and they are much—too much to be underestimated. But the thought that has troubled me is: Can I well perform my duties, and in such a manner as to do some good to the people of the State? I know there is room for it, and I know that I am honest and sincere in that desire to do well, but the question is whether I know enough to accomplish what I desire. . . .

I will tell you, first of all others, the policy I intend to adopt, and that is to make the matter a business engagement between the people of the State and myself, in

which the obligation on my side is to perform the duties assigned me with an eye single to the interests of my employers. I shall have no idea of re-election or any higher political preferment in my head, but be very thankful and happy if I can well serve one term as the people's Governor. Do you know that if mother were alive I should feel so much safer? I have always thought her prayers had much to do with my success. I shall expect you to help me in that way. . . .

Your affectionate brother,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

When the vote was counted it was found that Grover Cleveland had received 535,318 out of a total of 915,539, a majority too large for a mere party victory. It represented the voice of New York's better self, speaking in terms of reform. But it also represented the determination of Blaine's followers that President Arthur's candidate should not be chosen. By the thousands they had absented themselves from the polls, and so helped to give prominence to a personality far more dangerous to the ambition of their brilliant leader than Arthur could ever have been.

As Governor of New York, Grover Cleveland transferred to his larger sphere of activity the habits of plain living, incessant labor, and courageous action which had characterized him during his brief period as Mayor of Buffalo. With a spacious residence at his disposal—spacious as compared with the simple bachelor apartments which he had occupied during his Buffalo days—he developed no taste for society. At times, as custom required, he threw open the doors of the Executive Mansion. But he viewed these functions as a species of penance, rather than as a diversion—a penance which, with



his colored steward, William Sinclair, in control, usually extended beyond the evening concerned. "William," he wrote to Bissell, the day after one of these functions, "has been making me eat up the remains of the reception."

He began to study the records before he began to draw his salary; and as soon as the ceremony of inauguration was over, withdrew to his office and settled down to work, leaving with the astonished attendants an order to "admit at once anyone who asks to see the Governor." This in itself was a revolution. It was the opening of "the forbidden city," for the Governors of New York had long been accustomed to surround themselves with formalities which rendered them difficult of access. But Grover Cleveland liked to meet his adversaries face to face, to fight his battles in the open. Life in a country store, at Fayetteville, and later amid the intimate surroundings of Buffalo, had done for him what the intimacies of the country store did for Patrick Henry, Henry Clay, Abraham Lincoln, and numerous other American statesmen who used this "frontier clubhouse" as their social center. It taught him to understand humanity. In the Buffalo hotel, bar, or restaurant, he had met upon terms of intimacy, farmers, cattlemen, commercial travelers, politicians, and the rest of the varied assortment of Americans who congregated there. He had learned how they think, scheme, plan, and fight, and he trusted his ability to deal with them, without taking advantage of the shelter which high executive office offers.

To the eager spoilsman, as to all others, he was easily accessible, and he did not speak in Delphic phrase. To the oft-repeated question, "Is it not due me on account of my work during the campaign?" his reply was: "I don't know that I fully understand you." But when the explanation was made, and the spoilsman's motto in any



of its myriad forms was displayed, he made it abundantly clear that the new Governor acknowledged no allegiance to a tradition which sanctioned payment for partisan services out of the people's treasury.

Rendered suspicious by his previous official experiences, he took nothing on faith, but studied with extreme care each bill sent up for his signature. Those which he considered in the public interest he signed. Those which he regarded as unwise, inexpedient, or worse (and there were many of the latter class) he vetoed. Those which were susceptible of alterations which would make them good laws, he laboriously altered, and returned with the suggestion that he could sign them if changed. He had not learned—indeed he never learned—to conserve his own strength by delegating the labor of such investigations to others. As a result, he expended his vast energies upon details usually left in the hands of subordinates. Applications for pardons added enormously to his labors, for he reviewed each case himself and worked out his decisions according to the laws of evidence, being unwilling either to deny or to grant appeals upon the basis of any but his own mental processes.

It is easy for those wedded to modern methods of executive efficiency to scorn such apparent wastefulness; but it gave to Governor Cleveland's public documents a ring of certitude which left his less laborious antagonists at a disadvantage. They soon understood that when the Governor stated a fact, it was useless to attempt to prove it fiction; when he referred to a statute, it was wasted energy to check up his reference. And the public came to realize that when he cried "Wolf! wolf!" they must not allow themselves to be deceived by sheep's clothing, for in the end the wolf was certain to appear, and the Governor's warnings to be justified.

When a public man wins a reputation for unimpeachable honesty, he takes hold upon public confidence; but until he can show in addition that he has wisdom, his hold is easily loosened. Grover Cleveland, in the two years of his governorship, impressed the people with both his honesty and his wisdom, and to these he added the quality of courage which gave a touch of the dramatic so essential to political success. He dared to defend the rights of small holders, and of the State, against the unjust demands of corporations; but he was equally ready to face the less popular duty of defending the rights of corporations when the public, misled by demagogues or by the no less dangerous valor of ignorance, clamored for their destruction.

When the First National Bank of Buffalo failed, he refused to sign a bill authorizing the Comptroller to lighten its liabilities. "The bank has failed," he said in his veto message, "and is unable to refund the State's deposits. The securities in the bond have thus become liable . . . and I can see no reason why they should be relieved. I am willing to do what I can to check the growing impression that contracts with the State will not be insisted upon or may be evaded. The money deposited with the bank was public money . . . and I regard it the duty of all having the care of state affairs to see to it that no part is lost. . . ."

Public officials, according to his philosophy, are not advocates seeking to gain something for their client, the Government, but guardians of that right and justice whose preservation is essential both to Government and individual. A severe test of this principle came in the spring of 1883, in the form of the Five-Cent Fare Bill. This bill was what the politician calls "vote-getting legislation," being designed to reduce the cost of living and to



give the citizen more for his money. It enabled him to ride for five cents to places which it had previously cost him ten cents to reach. The facts were as follows:

The elevated railroads of New York City were allowed by their charters to charge a ten cent fare for any distance between the Battery and Harlem River, except at the rush hours, when they must carry passengers at five cents each. The New York Legislature, yielding to a strong popular sentiment, passed Assembly Bill Number 58 prohibiting the collection of more than five cents for any distance between these points at any hour.

Mr. Cleveland studied the bill and found that it arbitrarily deprived the Manhattan Railway Company of a right granted by charter. Promptly, and with characteristic disregard of "good politics," he prepared an elaborately reasoned veto message insisting that the bill should not become a law. "I am not unmindful, . . ." he said, "that this bill originated in response to the demand of a large portion of the people of New York for cheaper rates . . . [but] there exists a contract in favor of this company, which is protected by that clause of the Constitution of the United States which prohibits the passage of a law by any state impairing the obligation of contracts."

After a detailed examination of the origin and specific nature of this contract, with the considerations which might be thought to have rendered it inoperative, or to have justified its violation, he added: "While the charters of corporations may be altered or repealed, it must be done in subordination to the Constitution of the United States, which is the supreme law of the land. This leads to the conclusion that the alteration of a charter cannot be made the pretext for the passage of a law which impairs the obligation of a contract." He argued that the



companies had fulfilled their obligations, had paid into the public treasury over \$120,000, and had met a public need which previous projectors had failed to meet. "I am not aware," he said, "that the corporations have, by any default, forfeited any of their rights; and if they have, the remedy is at hand under existing laws. . . . The State should be not only strictly just, but scrupulously fair, and in its relation to the citizen every legal and moral obligation should be recognized. This can only be done by legislating without vindictiveness or prejudice, and with a firm determination to deal justly and fairly with those from whom we exact obedience."

This argument should be read in its entirety by that increasing body of Americans who to-day are inclined to denounce property rights and to demand that the State disregard them. In it, Grover Cleveland took his stand squarely upon the solid foundation of the rights of property, and the people of New York sustained him. His clear-cut decision, wrote Andrew D. White, was "that, whatever his sympathies for the working people might be, he could not, as an honest man, allow such a bill to pass, and come what might, he would not. . . . Glad was I to see that the Governor rose above all the noise and claptrap which was raised about the question, went to the fundamental point of the matter, and vetoed the bill. I think his course at that time gained him the respect of every thinking man in the State."

Theodore Roosevelt, then a New York Assemblyman of twenty-three, was conspicuous among those who had rallied to the "noise and claptrap" and had driven the bill through the New York Legislature. In the clear light of the Governor's veto message, however, he saw his error and, with the frank, generous courage which always characterized him, acknowledged it. "I have to say with

shame," he announced in an astonishing confession before the Legislature, "that when I voted for this bill I did not act as I think I ought to have acted and as I generally have acted on the floor of this House. I have to confess that I weakly yielded, partly in a vindictive spirit toward the infernal thieves and conscienceless swindlers who have had the elevated railroad in charge, and partly to the popular voice of New York. I realize that they [managers of the railway] have done the most incalculable wrong to this community with their hired newspaper, with their corruption of the judiciary, with their corruption of past legislatures. It is not a question of doing right to them. They are merely common thieves. It is not a question of doing justice to them. It is a question of doing justice to ourselves. It is a question of standing by what we honestly believe to be right, even if in so doing we antagonize the feelings of our constituents."

The mind of the elder reformer had touched and illuminated with its clear reasoning the mind of the younger reformer, who at once altered his course and followed the Governor. "I believed," Roosevelt wrote in his autobiography, many years later, "the veto was proper, and those who felt as I did supported the veto, for although it was entirely right that the fare should be reduced to five cents, which was soon afterwards done, the method was unwise, and would have set a mischievous precedent."

The night after the veto message, while Mr. Cleveland was preparing for bed, he said to himself, as he afterwards confessed to Richard Watson Gilder, "By to-morrow at this time I will be the most unpopular man in the state of New York."

"As I got into bed that night," he later declared to Joseph Bucklin Bishop, "I said to myself, 'Grover Cleve-



land, you have done the business for yourself to-night.' The next morning I went down to the Executive Office feeling pretty blue, but putting a smiling face on it. I didn't look at the morning papers; I didn't think they had anything to say that I cared to see. I went through my morning mail with my secretary, Dan Lamont, pretending all the time that I didn't care about the papers, but thinking of them all the time, just the same. When we had finished I said as indifferently as I could, 'Seen the morning papers, Dan?' He said, 'Yes.' 'What have they got to say about me, anything?' 'Why, yes, they are all praising you.' 'They are? Well, here, let me see them.' I tell you, I grabbed them pretty quickly, and felt a good deal better."

There were, however, many who were little inclined to join in the applause. A few nights after the appearance of the veto, Governor Cleveland appeared in a theatre and the audience rose and hissed him. They did not know that at the very time of the veto he was using his influence to get the elevated railway to try the five-cent fare, of which he heartily approved. His veto was aimed, not at the measure, but at the method, which he felt to be a clear breach of public faith. Therefore, in utter disregard of the political penalties which he believes such a course would entail, he defied the people for the people's good, not as an autocrat, but as a representative who considered it his duty to give the public the benefit of his judgment as well as of his energy.

Before the mingled sounds of approval and denunciation regarding the veto had died away, the Governor found himself compelled to take action which brought him into open and bitter conflict with John Kelly and Tammany Hall, whose influence had been so potent a factor in securing for him the post of Governor of New



York. State Senator Thomas F. Grady, one of Tammany's favorite sons, had been a thorn in the side of the Cleveland administration from the day of the assembling of the legislature. But now, as the end of the last session approached, he became unbearable, boldly standing, in combination with the two other Tammany senators and the Republicans, in the way of the Cleveland program, even after it had received legislative sanction.

On the last day of the session two of the Governor's most cherished reform measures—a bill regulating the duties of harbor masters, and a bill for reducing the expenses of the Immigration Commission and placing it under a single Commissioner—were passed, and the Governor at once made the nominations necessary for their immediate operation. These nominations the Grady-Republican combine managed to "hang up," thus postponing the reforms at least until the convening of a new legislature. Mr. Cleveland's indignant protest was answered by a bitter personal attack from Grady, and the stolid refusal of the combination to allow action on the nominations.

When the session ended, with the reforms inoperative, Kelly assured the Governor's angry followers that Grady's course had been without the advice of Tammany, and that his attack upon the Governor was disapproved and would be properly rebuked. He even declared himself in full accord with Mr. Cleveland's policies, and anxious to make the administration a success. Ten days later, however, he sent Grady with his proxy into a meeting of the State Committee, and announced his intention of renominating him for the Senate. In view of these facts, Mr. Cleveland drafted and sent to Kelly the following specific note:

Executive Chamber, Albany.

*October 20, 1883.*

HON. JOHN KELLY

MY DEAR SIR:

It is not without hesitation that I write this. I have determined to do so, however, because I see no reason why I should not be entirely frank with you.

I am anxious that Mr. Grady should not be returned to the next Senate. I do not wish to conceal the fact that my personal comfort and satisfaction are involved in the matter. But I know that good legislation, based upon a pure desire to promote the interests of the people and the improvement of legislative methods, are also deeply involved.

I forbear to write in detail of the other considerations having relation to the welfare of the party and the approval to be secured by a change for the better in the character of its representatives. These things will occur to you without suggestion from me.

Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Kelly put this letter in his pocket and proceeded with his plans for returning Senator Grady to Albany. The Governor gave out no copy, and made no public comment, being content to allow the Tammany leader to meet the suggestion in his own way. The move for Democratic unity, for a union of Tammany Democrats, Irving Hall Democrats, and County Democrats, in the face of the coming election, seemed the only hope of electing Democratic state senators, and Governor Cleveland did not feel it necessary to endanger that unity by a too open insistence upon Grady's elimination.

But what Cleveland felt it unnecessary to do, local or-



ganizations promptly accomplished. The Sixth District defied Kelly and nominated ex-Justice Timothy J. Campbell for the State Senate. Kelly next attempted to have Grady nominated in the Fifth District; but the leaders there would tolerate no such suggestion, insisting that Colonel M. C. Murphy was, and would remain, their candidate. At this point, Grady wisely declared that he would not run in any district, and the matter was settled, without the Governor's letter being called into use. The indignant Tammanyites, however, played into the hands of the grateful Republicans, by abandoning the union idea and making straight Tammany nominations for the Senate in all senatorial districts.

In order to lend color to the story that the Governor had interfered in New York City politics, Kelly gave the Grady letter to the New York *World*, which published it on November 2d, suppressing the name of the recipient. In the same column appeared a statement from Kelly that "All the disaffection existing in the Democratic party to-day in this country has its root and center in the brain of the Executive. He has allowed his personal spite towards Senator Grady to get the better of his judgment, and yet Grady has done nothing to merit such a spirit of revenge on the part of the Governor. Senator Grady's reply to the Governor's message bringing the Senate to task for failing to confirm his nominations for harbor masters, port wardens, and Commissioner of Immigration just before the adjournment of the last session was dignified and his grounds for the statements uttered at the time were, to my mind, well taken." With the exception of a brief acknowledgment of the authenticity of the Grady letter, and the statement that it had been written to Kelly, the Governor held his peace; and



in this divided condition, the New York Democracy faced the elections.

The Republican factions, the Stalwarts and the Half-Breeds, on the other hand, had for the time buried the hatchet, and the result was Republican unity and victory over a divided Democracy. Democratic majorities in both houses were changed to minorities, and even the New York *World*, which for three days insisted that the Democrats had won, was forced to admit, on November 9th, that "The Senate will stand nineteen Republicans, thirteen Democrats. . . . The new Assembly will be composed of seventy-three Republicans and fifty-five Democrats." Thus Assemblyman Theodore Roosevelt came back to his seat, with the comfortable feeling that he was leading a dominant party, though ready to co-operate with the Governor in all measures of sound and progressive reform.

Four days after the election, Grady, in a fiery speech in Tammany Hall, bitterly attacked the Governor; and Kelly sustained the attack by again publishing the Grady letter, this time in facsimile beneath the headlines: "How Harmony Fell Through in New York." He editorially interpreted the letter as an attempted interference of the Executive with the action of the people in choosing their representatives. The Tammany papers throughout the state, taking the cue, raised the cry of executive interference, and the Republican press gladly followed suit.

Until almost the end of November, Mr. Cleveland made no further statement concerning the Grady incident. But, on the twenty-third, the New York *Herald* sent a special correspondent to Albany to get the Governor's views regarding the matter. He found Mr. Cleveland, for once, not only ready but eager to talk through

the press, and not disposed to measure his words too carefully.

"Mr. Cleveland sat in his large revolving chair, alone. He looked vigorous and buoyant, the Hancock standard of two hundred and fifty pounds having evidently been long since reached.

" 'This letter of yours to Kelly,' said the correspondent, 'has caused a great deal of talk.'

"The heavy chair of the Governor moved a little nearer as he replied:

" 'Indeed? Well, I suppose so. Why?'

" 'That is for you to say,' the reporter responded.

" 'I hold,' said the Governor, 'that it was the proper thing, under the circumstances, to send that letter.'

" 'You think Grady was not a proper representative to send back to the Senate?' queried the visitor.

" 'I do, most assuredly,' Mr. Cleveland answered. 'His action in the Senate has been against the interests of the people and of good government, and his ready tongue gave him power to be of great aid to bad men. I believed that the Democratic party could not afford to endorse such a course, and that his rejection would be a great benefit to the party and to the people. What's the use of striving for the Senate, County Democrats argue, and have Grady holding the balance of power to sell us out to the Republicans?'

" 'But about the letter, Governor?' asked the reporter.

"The big armchair again moved closer, and the Governor said: 'I sat down without the knowledge of any person and wrote to Kelly—this man who had been assuring me of his anxiety to give me aid in my work. I suggested, not for my personal comfort, which I did not deny would be subserved, but for the good of the public service, that he who had the power to say "Go" or "Come" should



not force the nomination of Grady upon the Democrats of the State. No man ever acted with a more positive desire to serve the State than I did when I wrote that letter to a man claiming to be my friend. I suggested that he who had the power should favor some better man for the Senate.'

" 'Did Kelly ever answer your letter?' asked the interviewer.

" 'No,' replied the Governor. 'If he had been what I took him to be, and believed in Grady's nomination, he would have so written frankly in reply. He put the letter in his pocket, and, I understand, called in his district leaders in Grady's district and stated his purpose to nominate him. The responses understood to be from these leaders were that Grady could not be elected in his home district. Then Mr. Kelly went to the Fifth District, where Colonel M. C. Murphy had been nominated in pursuance of an understanding between all the organizations in the district. In violation of this understanding he sought to renominate Grady there. Then and not till then did Mr. Grady announce his retirement, a retirement which was forced by the fact that he could not be elected. All this time my letter had been in Kelly's pocket.

" 'What then? Mr. Kelly—whom many who opposed him in politics believed to be a gentleman—took this private, personal letter, written, as he knew, for his own eyes only, to the New York *World*, and requested its publication, together with a story that that letter prevented union nominations in New York and would make the Senate Republican. At the same time Mr. Kelly's newspaper was openly attacking and seeking the defeat of four Democratic Senators outside of New York—Henry C.



Nelson, James Mackin, John C. Jacobs, and John J. Kieran, and one or more Democratic Assemblymen.'

"When asked whether he still believed that the Grady letter should have been sent to Kelly, Mr. Cleveland replied: 'Most undoubtedly. The letter was . . . written in the interest of the people, to better the representation in the Senate of this State. Its reception proved to me that the man who had been assuring me of his friendship was my enemy, and that of the cause which I had espoused. It gave an opportunity for this enemy to openly and coarsely insult me as Governor of the State. To say that this letter should not have been written from one gentleman to another—the one anxious to better the public service, and the other having it in his power to do it—is nonsense. To say that a man should go three hundred miles to say what he should not put on paper is the rankest kind of hypocrisy. This criticism can only be based upon the assumption that a man might say in conversation with another what he might afterward find it convenient to deny when there was no positive corroborative evidence to be brought forward as to the facts. It is unfortunate for the Democratic party that this "boss" system exists. While it does exist it became a necessity—a disagreeable necessity, I assure you—for me to recognize it, and consequently to address that letter to Kelly. However, the time is fast approaching when this odious system will be swept away and the voice of the people alone be recognized as potent in determining nominations to public offices.'

"After a brief pause, the Governor added: 'The will of the people had, I suppose, nothing to do with the nomination of Mr. Grady. It began and ended with the will of Mr. Kelly; and his election after nomination depended upon the same power, bounded only by the trades and

dickers that could be made with the so-called leaders, and the freedom of the field from other candidates. This is not a condition consistent with true democracy, and it is not a condition most favorable to good government; but I had nothing to do with creating it. I merely conceded it as I found it and wrote to the man who had the whole matter in his keeping. . . . If this be treason I can't see how I can escape its consequences. I have supposed that Mr. Grady was not put in his old field because Mr. Campbell insisted on running in opposition to him. Campbell's majority indicates that the people were quite willing to vote for somebody besides Grady.' "

The sequel showed that from that date Tammany Hall was ever "quite willing to vote for somebody besides" Grover Cleveland. The Governor had incurred for his whole future the bitter enmity of the most powerful of all Democratic clubs, Tammany Hall, and that with the presidential year only a few weeks ahead.

Mr. Cleveland watched the old year out with the satisfying belief that his first year as Governor was successfully completed. As he thought of the assembling of the Legislature on the following day, he checked up certain tangible proofs of definite achievement. Before him lay the manuscripts of forty-four executive vetoes, some consisting of elaborate arguments, some containing but a dozen lines, but each representing much patient labor, for, in each case he had himself investigated both the facts and the law involved. He counted, with equal pride, the number of appeals for executive clemency which he had examined and determined. Of the four hundred and forty-nine, thirty-nine were marked "Par-doned"; seventeen sentences had been commuted; one respite had been granted, and one hundred and eighty-



one prayers denied. The rest remained to be studied and disposed of in the months to come.

His message for the new Legislature was ready, and dated January 1, 1884. It was devoted wholly to state affairs, and remarkable in its frankness. In his inaugural message he had spoken with the modesty which becomes a man new to office. Now, however, with a year of intensive study behind him, he wrote with singular directness, bluntly denouncing specific abuses, in utter disregard of the feelings and of the votes of those responsible for them. His enumeration of his own achievements as Governor he presented without mock modesty, indeed, with conscious pride:

"The most practical and thorough civil service reform has gained a place in the policy of the State," he declared. "Political assessments upon employes in the public departments have been prohibited. The rights of all citizens at primary elections have been protected by law. A bureau has been established to collect information and statistics touching the relations between labor and capital. The sale of forest lands at the source of our important streams has been prohibited, thereby checking threatened disaster to the commerce on our waterways. Debts and obligations for the payment of money owned though not actually held within the State, have been made subject to taxation, thus preventing an unfair evasion of liability for the support of the Government. Business principles have been introduced in the construction and care of the new capitol, and other public buildings, and waste and extravagance thereby prevented. A law has been passed for the better administration of the immigration bureau and the prevention of its abuses. The people have been protected by placing co-operative insurance companies under the control and supervision of the Insurance De-



partment. The fees of receivers have been reduced and regulated in the interests of creditors of investment companies. A court of claims has been established where the demands of a citizen against the State may be properly determined. These legislative accomplishments, and others of less importance and prominence, may be cited in proof of the fact that the substantial interests of the people of the State have not been neglected."

His successes had been of varied character, his conflicts numerous, and his victories of gratifying frequency. But in his frank avowal of success, there is no sign of the dangerous complacency which considers the work done as soon as the blue prints are complete. He saw clearly the evils which still held firm footing in the commonwealth, and pointed them out with perfect frankness. He told the Legislature that it was accused of recessing too often, and for inadequate reasons, clearly intimating his own sympathy with the critics.

His comments upon the problem of corporations and their regulation anticipated the views later advanced by President Roosevelt. But Cleveland's plan called for state regulation, while Roosevelt's later solution was through Federal action. "It is a grave question," declared Governor Cleveland's message, "whether the formation of these artificial bodies ought not to be checked or better regulated and in some way supervised. At any rate, they should always be kept well in hand, and the funds . . . protected by the State which has invited their investment. While the stockholders are the owners of the corporate property, notoriously they are oftentimes completely in the power of the directors and managers, who acquire a majority of the stock, and by this means perpetuate their control, using the corporate property and franchise for their benefit and profit, regardless of the

interests and rights of the minority stockholders. Immense salaries are paid to officers; transactions are consummated by which the directors make money, while the rank and file among the stockholders lose it; the honest investor waits for dividends, and the directors grow rich. It is suspected, too, that large sums are spent under various disguises in efforts to influence legislation."

The oft-repeated suggestion that redress is always open to small holders before the courts, he scornfully dismissed with the words: "It is a hollow mockery. . . . Under existing statutes, the law's delay, perplexity, and uncertainty lead to despair." Pitiless publicity was the remedy which he urged as a protection against dishonest tendencies. "The State," he declared, "should either refuse to allow these corporations to exist under its authority and patronage, or acknowledging their paternity and its responsibility, should provide a simple, easy way for its people . . . to discover how the funds . . . are spent, and how their affairs are conducted. . . . This might well be accomplished by requiring corporations to frequently file reports, made out with the utmost detail, and which would not allow lobby expenses to be hidden under the pretext of legal services and counsel fees. . . . Such requirements might not be favorable to stock speculation, but they would protect the innocent investors. . . . The honestly conducted and strong corporations would have nothing to fear; the badly managed and weak ought to be exposed."

During his second year as Governor a bill was sent up to him which served admirably as the occasion for a frank expression of his views upon representative government and executive authority, views which should delight the soul of every advocate of the short ballot. It provided that, after January 1, 1885, "all appointments to



office in the city of New York now made by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Aldermen, shall be made by the Mayor without such confirmation," and thus involved enormous concentration of power in the hands of the Mayor of New York.

In approving it the Governor declared: "I cannot see that any principle of democratic rule is more violated in the one case than in the other. . . . Nor are the rights of the people to self-government, in theory and principle, better protected when the power of appointment is vested in twenty-five men . . . than when this power is put in the hands of one man. . . . If the chief executive of the city is to be held responsible for its order and good government, he should not be hampered by any interference with his selection of subordinate administrative officers; nor should he be permitted to find in a divided responsibility an excuse for any neglect of the best interests of the people. . . . No instance has been cited in which a bad appointment has been prevented by the refusal of the Board of Aldermen . . . to confirm a nomination [and] an absolute and undivided responsibility . . . accords with correct business principles."

The reply to such theories has generally been, "Despotism, danger to republican government!" But Governor Cleveland recognized no such danger. "I can hardly realize the unprincipled boldness of the man who would accept at the hands of his neighbors this sacred trust, and, standing alone in the full light of public observation . . . willfully prostitute his powers and defy the will of the people. To say that such a man could by such means perpetuate his wicked rule, concedes either that the people are vile, or that self-government is a deplorable failure."

In republics there is a law of natural selection, not



invariably operative, but generally so. Few men reach the heights of power unless, in some important respects at least, they are gifted above their fellows. Grover Cleveland had the homely gift of common sense, the heroic gift of unflinching courage, the rare gift of long patience, and the divine gift of unimpeachable honesty. For such a man the times were calling. But the call did not fall upon too willing ears. Less than four months before the meeting of the Democratic National Convention, he wrote to Mr. Charles S. Fairchild:

"It is absolutely true that I have always regarded any suggestion of my candidacy for a place higher than the one I now occupy, as a serious mistake on every ground except merely personal ones; and on such latter grounds as *entirely inadmissible*. . . . I should not feel perhaps that I ought to refuse to do what the sentiment of my party should require of me—but I believe that there is no such sentiment that will embarrass me; and if there is it can be guided in the proper direction and enlightened.

"I have but one ambition, and that is to make a good Governor and do something for the people of the State and, and by such means, benefit the party to which I belong. I feel now that I shall desire to retire from public life at the close of my present term; and, making every allowance for a change of sentiment, it is absolutely certain, that an endorsement by the offer of a second term will satisfy every wish I can possibly entertain, at all related to political life. You see I tell you frankly not only what I don't want, but what possibly I may want. My expectation is, however, that I shall be able to somewhat prepare the way for better things, and that then I shall be relieved as one who has performed his purpose in political affairs. With this I shall be content."

William C. Hudson, in his *Random Recollections of*

*an Old Political Reporter*, says that when Mr. Cleveland's associates at Albany gathered around him, in the summer of 1884, predicting his nomination by the Democratic National Convention, he replied: "Go away, boys, and let me do my work as Governor. You're always trying to get me into a scrape." And Frank W. Mack has left us an account of a visit to Governor Cleveland, just three days before the State Convention, called to choose delegates-at-large to Chicago:

"He was alone and his greeting was that of a man . . . who welcomed other comradeship than that of his own thoughts."

" 'Well, you come from the outside world?' he half questioned.

" 'Yes, Governor, and things seem to be coming your way.'

"He turned a look, half quizzical, half apprehensive. There was no glint of pleased ambition in the face that averted itself . . . and when he sighed heavily, it was more than half a groan.

" 'It looks that way to you, too, does it?'

" 'I certainly can see no other outcome—who, by the way, has the distinction of sharing my views?'

"Mr. Cleveland turned a tired face toward the great, sun-lighted window. Somewhere in the big features was an expression as of one harried.

" 'Dorsheimer was just up here,' he spoke, 'and he used exactly the same words that you did.'

" 'You seem not highly gleeful, Mr. Governor, as to the outlook,' I ventured. The spectacle of a man saddened by the prospect of a presidential nomination was new to me, and rather disconcerting. . . . I looked on, silent.

" 'Yes,' he muttered to himself at length; 'yes, I be-



lieve things are coming this way . . . and I feel certain now that I cannot escape it.'

" 'Escape the nomination?' I blurted.

" 'Yes, the nomination—escape the nomination, I say. Tell me this. Can you understand me—might anybody understand me—when I say that, if I were to indulge my personal impulse at this moment, I would go away into some forest, hide in some fastness where no man could reach and where this awful burden might never find me?' "

In the State Convention itself, however, there appeared among the Governor's followers no trace of their chief's aversion. They went to Syracuse determined to secure a delegation committed to his nomination, and every device was employed to that end. Circumstances, however, made success impossible. From the very beginning appeared the perennial conflict between the regular state organization and Tammany Hall, the former under the skillful leadership of Daniel Manning, working for Cleveland; the latter, led by the no less astute John Kelly, bitterly opposing him. Both factions knew that the question of Cleveland's nomination would probably depend upon whether the Manning forces or the Kelly forces could secure control of the New York delegation to be selected at Saratoga. Besides this great division in the New York Democracy, there were many minor divisions, causing numerous and delicate cases of contesting state delegates and locally supported would-be delegates to the National Convention. These Manning and D-Cady Herrick, Chairman of the Committee on Contested Seats, and a staunch Cleveland man, adjusted upon the basis of the general policy of avoiding an open conflict with Kelly or any of his allies.

Mr. Cleveland's administration as Governor was ap-



proved by resolution, the invariable courtesy extended by the New York Democracy to Democratic governors of New York, and understood to be merely a form. But when the Cleveland men urged upon Manning the passage of a resolution instructing the delegation to vote for the Governor at Chicago, the leader wisely declined to allow the resolution to be presented, explaining that in his opinion it could not be carried. Instead, instructions were adopted directing the New York delegates to the Democratic National Convention to vote, on the first ballot, for the man favored by the majority of those delegates. More than this he did not dare to attempt. Thus the initial vote of New York was left undetermined, to be settled in caucus by the delegates themselves after reaching Chicago.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MUGWUMP CAMPAIGN OF 1884

*"Let us be steadfast in our beliefs, unmoved by clamor, and untempted by an inordinate desire for success at any cost of principle and consistency. Thus will we serve our country best; thus shall we know the joy that mere success can never know."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

THE Republican party faced the presidential year 1884 with an accumulation of burdens due in part to long power, in part to the fact that the Civil War had rendered the opposition too long helpless. A strong opposition is as essential to government as is the party in power, a fact which the British recognize in the phrases: "His Majesty's Government" and "His Majesty's Opposition," and when the opposition is silenced, careless administration, ill-considered legislation, and the attendant evils of graft in high places result.

Upon the Democrats, popular judgment had placed the responsibility for rebellion, and the Republican leaders of reconstruction days had not allowed them to escape the full contumely of the verdict, pointing the finger of scorn at them, as a mere faction born for failure and defeat. Thus had the opposition been silenced, and the fact that at no time since reconstruction had the Republicans won at the same time the Presidency, the Senate, and the House had not checked their pride, or curbed their increasing heedlessness. Intent on party gains, which at times they dangerously confused with questions of private interests, they had continued to capitalize error,

by proclaiming that it was the Republican party which alone had saved the Union, freed the slave, crushed the menacing head of secession, and preserved a republic which they were therefore entitled to rule. In their plausible and complacent clamorings they forgot how many noble Democrats lay in their narrow graves in North and South, having given their lives for the cause of human freedom and a united republic. They forgot that Sherman and McClellan, Meade and Sheridan, Stanton and Chase, all staunch defenders of the nation, all heroes of the cause, were Democrats. Their party literature and their political speeches failed to recall the fact that even Abraham Lincoln had received his second nomination, not from the Republican party alone, but from a Union convention representing loyal Democrats and Republicans alike. Nor did they recall the fact that even during the dark days of the war Democrats had cast never less than forty-six per cent of the popular vote in the non-seceding states.

When the opposition had again become vocal, it pointed at disgraceful deeds and unprecedented official scandals wrought under the banner of the Republicans. The list is too long to recount in full, but it was not too long for the use of Democratic partisans and reformers of all parties in the campaign of 1884: One Secretary of War had resigned in order to avoid impeachment for bribery. The Navy Department had been a house of refuge for the type of jobber which Mr. Cleveland had faced and conquered as Mayor of Buffalo and as Governor of New York. The Whisky Ring had walked as purchaser in the very colonnades of the Capitol. A Speaker of the House of Representatives, with associates from both halls of Congress, was soiled by connection with the famous *Crédit Mobilier*.



The cries of the distressed and humiliated apostles of reforms that never came are concentrated in the speech of Senator Hoar of Massachusetts, delivered in connection with the proposed impeachment of Secretary of War Belknap in May, 1876: "My own public life has been a very brief and insignificant one, extending little beyond the duration of a single term of senatorial office. But in this brief period, I have seen five judges of a high court of the United States driven from office by threats of impeachment for corruption or maladministration. . . . I have seen the chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs in the House rise in his place and demand the expulsion of four of his associates for making sale of their official privilege of selecting the youths to be educated at our great military school. When the greatest railroad of the world, binding together the continent and uniting the two great seas which wash our shores, was finished, I have seen our national triumph and exultation turned to bitterness and shame by the unanimous reports of three committees of Congress—two of the House and one here,—that every step of that mighty enterprise had been taken in fraud. I have heard in the highest places the shameless doctrine avowed, by men grown old in public office, that the true way by which power should be gained in the Republic is to bribe the people with the offices created for their service, and the true end for which it should be used when gained is the promotion of selfish ambition and the gratification of personal revenge. I have heard that suspicion haunts the footsteps of the trusted companions of the President."

It was this burden which must fall upon the Republican candidate of 1884, a burden which only giant moral strength, in the shape of a candidate of spotless reputation, could hope to bear. When the Republican National Con-

vention assembled at Chicago, on June 3, 1884, it had many candidates, but one dominant leader, James G. Blaine, a man of brilliant powers and magnetic personality, yet one whose past touched, more or less intimately, the dark spots in the party's recent history. The unsavory memories left by the great railroad frauds still clung to him, although it had been his voice which had demanded investigation. The committee appointed had not managed to connect him with crime, but in the minds of many men his acquittal was the Scotch verdict, "not proven."

In 1876, Blaine had been the strongest leader in the Republican Convention, receiving 351 votes even on the seventh and final ballot, and would almost certainly have been nominated, had not the memory of shocking incidents insisted upon associating themselves with his name. Again, in the convention of 1880, these past scandals had risen in men's minds and he had once more been rejected as a candidate. With such a record behind him, Blaine was quite as vulnerable as he was masterful. But despite his obvious disadvantage, despite the mutterings of revolt among Independents and liberal Republicans bent on reform, the magic of the magnetic statesman, the "white plumed knight" as his adoring followers called him, now at last triumphed and Blaine was nominated.

In placing his name before the convention, Judge William H. West of Ohio employed high language and brilliant epigram: "Four and twenty years of the grandest history in the annals of recorded time have distinguished the ascendancy of the Republican party. Skies have lowered, and reverses have threatened. Our flag is still there, waving above the mansion of the Presidency; not a stain on its folds, not a cloud on its glory." At this the advocates of reform doubtless saw a vision of Oakes



Ames, John D. Sanborn, William A. Richardson, Schuyler Colfax, William W. Belknap, and a host of associates, and wondered at the speaker's calm assurance.

"To it," continued Judge West, "are stretched the imploring hands of ten million of political bondmen of the South; while, above, from the portals of light, is looking down the spirit of the immortal martyr who first bore it to victory, bidding us hail and Godspeed. In six campaigns has that symbol of union, of freedom, of humanity, and of progress, been borne in triumph. . . . Shall that banner triumph again?"

As soon as Blaine's nomination was assured, the question began to be whispered about, "What will George William Curtis and his followers do?" Curtis and Carl Schurz were the recognized leaders of the reform movement in the Republican party, and it was not difficult to foresee their open revolt from the leadership proposed for them. To their minds it was no longer a question of Democratic or Republican victory. "Republicans!" cried Schurz, "do you not see that the best Republican principles have already been defeated by that Republican nomination? Do you not see that those principles, which were the great soul of the Republican party, command you to maintain good government at any cost, be it even the timely sacrifice of party ascendancy?"

The final decision regarding the attitude of the Independents lay, of course, with the Democrats. Should they name a real reformer, strong Mugwump support was assured by the character of the Republican candidate. Two weeks after the adjournment of the Republican National Convention, Daniel Manning dispatched William C. Hudson to Chicago, to open the Cleveland headquarters at the Palmer House and prepare to receive the delegations as they should arrive. Manning and Lamont



had provided him with a list of the New York delegates, arranged in three sections. The first contained the names of those certain to support the Governor; the second, those believed to be opposed to his nomination; and the third, with six or eight names, was labeled "doubtful or undeclared." "If we cannot win these doubtful men," he said to Hudson, "we cannot hope to make a successful presentation of the Governor's name. Now, I want you to devote yourself to these doubtful men. Find out the conditions surrounding them, the influences, political, commercial and moral, . . . and if they are inclined to be against us, find out why. . . . We must subject them to pressure . . . but first we must learn the sort of pressure that should be applied."

Upon reaching Chicago, Hudson found that Tammany Hall had anticipated his methods, for Thomas F. Grady was already at work there "fixing" the local press, but fixing it against the New York Governor, and laying plans to induce the convention to absolve the New York delegation from its instructions. Blaine engines were also at work, seeking to eliminate Cleveland, whom they counted as their leader's most formidable opponent. Skillfully both forces were tampering with the Irish, seeking to make it appear that Grover Cleveland was the irreconcilable enemy of their race, a bigoted Presbyterian, trained to consider the Church of Rome "the Scarlet Woman" of Holy Writ.

The work of counteracting these sinister forces was far from complete when, on July 8th, the Democrats swarmed into the city for their convention. Most conspicuous among these was the Tammany Hall delegation, six hundred strong, headed by John Kelly, the most famous professional politician in America, and known to be there for the express purpose of defeating the

dreams of the Cleveland men who had ventured to push a New York Democrat without the advice and consent of the organization. Crowds had met the "Tigers" at the station, and had wondered at their numbers as they defiled from their two special trains. Only a few wore delegates' badges, but all were there to intimidate the convention and defeat Cleveland.

Although generally recognized as the leading candidate, Cleveland was to these Tammany men only an enemy of the order, a Democrat who had refused to divide the spoils and must be made to pay the penalty of his insurgency. They had watched his career, and were determined to have a candidate of less downright methods. Nor had they forgotten the Grady letter and the Governor's denunciation of boss rule and Tammany methods in his interview with the New York *Herald*, reported shortly after the state elections of 1883.

In addition to the traditional two-thirds rule which Martin Van Buren and Andrew Jackson had created for the Democratic party in 1832, this particular convention declared that no state delegation should alter its vote until the completion of the roll call. The New York Convention had instructed its delegation to cast its seventy-two votes for the candidate favored by a majority of its members, but it was by no means certain whom that majority favored. The work of putting pressure upon the doubtful New York delegates had not yet succeeded to the point of making Cleveland sure of the support of his own state on the first ballot. Even on the morning fixed for the decision Manning was in doubt, for two New York delegates had mysteriously disappeared, and the most careful search had failed to discover them. When at last they were found and led into the meeting of the state delegation, confesses Hudson, "one of them bore the



promise of . . . a state office. . . . The two made the majority by which Cleveland was named in that caucus, on the last day before the meeting of the convention. . . . 'By what small chances do we live in history.' "

Thus, when the convention opened, Cleveland was sure of the entire New York vote on the first ballot, unless the Tammany delegates could devise some method of breaking down the unit rule. Accordingly, on the first day of the convention, Mr. Thomas F. Grady moved that the National Convention absolve the New York delegation from its obligation to obey the instructions of the State Convention. This bold move failed, and, in failing, strengthened Mr. Cleveland's chances, as 463 of the 792 delegates who voted refused to sanction this movement to rob him of his delegates. Their refusal was due not so much to superior virtue as to the attitude of the Independent Republicans, the so-called "Mugwumps," whose many votes were waiting for the Democratic ballot box, should a candidate be nominated who could be trusted to carry out reform. Blaine's nomination had resulted in the formation of independent committees in Boston and New York, which had opened correspondence with anti-Blaine factions throughout the nation; and these had intimated their purpose to vote the Democratic ticket, should a suitable candidate be named by the Chicago convention.

On the second day the real struggle began. The venerable Samuel J. Tilden, in a letter to Daniel Manning, Chairman of the Democratic State Committee of New York, had definitely declared his desire that his name should not be considered. "I ought not," he said, "to assume a task which I have not the physical strength to carry through. . . . To reform the administration of the Federal Government, to realize my own ideal, and to ful-



fill the just expectations of the people, would indeed warrant . . . the sacrifices which the undertaking would involve. But in my condition of advancing years and declining strength, I feel no assurance of my ability to accomplish these objects. I am, therefore, constrained to say, definitely, that I cannot assume the labors of an administration or of a canvass."

The field was, therefore, open for younger men, and the first name presented was that of Senator Thomas F. Bayard, whom Governor Cleveland considered the most desirable of the candidates. Thomas A. Hendricks was next recognized by the chair, and presented the name of Joseph E. McDonald as the unanimous choice of the State of Indiana. Allen G. Thurman and John G. Carlisle were then proposed; and Daniel Lockwood mounted the platform to present the name of Grover Cleveland. His words were effective, for they were the recital of achievement, and of recent achievement.

"A little more than three years ago," he said, "I had the honor at the city of Buffalo to present the name of this same gentleman for the office of mayor of that city. It was presented then for the same reason, and from the same causes, that we present it now. It was because the government of that city had become corrupt, had become debauched, and political integrity sat not in high places. The people looked for a man who would represent honest government, and without any hesitation they named Grover Cleveland.

"The result of that election and of his holding that office was, that in less than nine months the State of New York found herself in a position to want just such a candidate and for just such a purpose. At the State Convention of 1882 his name was placed in nomination for the office of Governor of the State of New York. The

same people, the same class of people, knew that that meant honest government, it meant pure government, it meant Democratic government, and it was ratified; and, gentlemen, now, after eighteen months of service there the Democracy of the State of New York come to you and ask you to go to the country, to go to the independent and Democratic voters of the country, to go to the young men of the country, the new blood of the country, and present the name of Grover Cleveland as your standard bearer."

Instantly Mr. Grady presented the objections of the Tammany group, and in reply Mr. E. P. Apgar pointed to the reform element and warned the convention of impending defeat should the counsels of the Tammany delegates prevail.

"There are," he said, "a hundred thousand men in the State of New York who do not care a snap of their finger whether the Republican party or the Democratic party, as such, shall carry the election. They vote in every election according to the issues and the candidates presented. These men absolutely hold the control of the politics of New York in their hands. They are the balance of power. You must have their vote or you cannot win. . . . These men unitedly, to a man, implore you to nominate . . . Governor Tilden's successor, elected Governor for the same causes. They ask you to place him in nomination in order that all elements opposed to the longer continuance of the Republican party in power may be united and make its defeat certain."

Other nominations and other speeches followed, but the name of Grover Cleveland continued to be the center of enthusiasm, an enthusiasm which was raised to a clamor by the brilliant eulogium of Governor Edward S. Bragg of Wisconsin, who, voicing the sentiment of the young



men of the West, declared, "They love him most for the enemies he has made." In these words he gave a campaign cry, certain to echo and re-echo throughout a nation grown weary of machine rule, and ever responsive to attacks upon Tammany Hall.

At midnight of the third day the first ballot was taken, and Kelly was forced by the still unrepealed unit rule to cast Tammany's vote for the Governor of New York whom he so ardently desired to defeat. Grover Cleveland received more than twice as many votes as any other candidate, but still lacked the necessary two-thirds majority.

#### FIRST BALLOT

Total number of votes . . . . .	820
Votes necessary to nomination . . . . .	547
Cleveland . . . . . 392	Carlisle . . . . . 27
Bayard . . . . . 170	Flower . . . . . 4
Thurman . . . . . 88	Hoadley . . . . . 3
Randall . . . . . 78	Hendricks . . . . . 1
McDonald . . . . . 56	Tilden . . . . . 1

A careful study of the details of this ballot greatly encouraged the Cleveland men. His 392 votes came from thirty-eight of the forty-seven states and territories represented in the convention. This indicated a national enthusiasm, and meant that he would soon fall heir to many votes which had been given, on the first ballot, to favorite sons. At this point, to the consternation of many Cleveland men, Manning effected an adjournment. He had noticed that many of the older delegates had left the hall, and feared that a second ballot might show fewer votes for Cleveland.

John Kelly, Benjamin F. Butler, and other foes of the Governor of New York spent the small hours of the night



staging a stampede for Thomas A. Hendricks. In connivance with the sergeant-at-arms, they packed the galleries with men pledged to raise the cry of "Hendricks for President," as soon as the well-known Indiana delegate should appear at the morning session. These plans Manning discovered, and skillfully nullified by sending a messenger to each member of the convention, warning him of the plot. When at the appointed hour, therefore, Hendricks made his appearance before the convention, the galleries rang with shouts and applause; but the delegations sat unmoved. Only the little knot of Tammany delegates joined in the cry for "Hendricks! Hendricks!"

As the second ballot proceeded, it became more and more evident that the intrigues of the past night had not weakened the Cleveland forces. Randall's friends withdrew his name. McDonald's Indiana delegation was transferred to the column of Governor Hendricks. Illinois announced thirty-eight votes for Grover Cleveland, and New York gave him seventy-two, despite the objections of Tammany Hall. As state after state was called, Cleveland's column steadily increased, and Thomas A. Hendricks's total also mounted, though less rapidly. When the roll call was ended, it was evident that Cleveland's strength was irresistible, although he was still seventy-two votes short of a two-thirds majority. At once delegation after delegation eagerly clamored for recognition by the chair, in order that it might change its votes to the winning candidate; and, at one o'clock, when the revised ballot was read, Cleveland showed a total of 683 votes, 136 more than the number required for nomination. Tammany was beaten again by Grover Cleveland, and the hall resounded with the cry: "We love him for the enemies he has made."

The following table shows the final result:

Cleveland . . . . .	683
Bayard . . . . .	81 ½
Hendricks . . . . .	45 ½
Randall . . . . .	4
Thurman . . . . .	4
McDonald . . . . .	2

Governor Hendricks was then nominated as the vice-presidential candidate, and the convention, after singing "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow," adjourned, to face a fiercer fight upon a wider stage.

During the meeting of the Chicago convention, Governor Cleveland remained at his post in Albany, disposing of his executive work in his usual methodical manner. The *World's* Albany dispatch tells the story of how he received the news of his nomination:

"It was 1:45 a. m. when General Farnsworth heard what he supposed to be a cannon shot. He held up his hand, exclaiming, 'Listen!' The wind was westerly, but the next and succeeding shots were distinctly heard, and it was known that Cleveland was nominated, the first dispatch to the Governor being received a few moments later.

"General Farnsworth, after hearing the second shot, jumped up and exclaimed: 'They are firing a salute, Governor, over your nomination.'

" 'That's what it means,' added Colonel Lamont.

" 'Do you think so?' said the Governor, quietly. 'Well,' he continued, 'anyhow, we'll finish up this work.'

"The work was resumed, and General Farnsworth began reading again from his proof.

"In a couple of minutes the telephone rang, and a



voice said: 'Tell the Governor he has been nominated on the second ballot.' Lamont repeated the words.

"'Is that so, Dan?' said the Governor, as his face brightened up for the first time. 'By jove, that is something, isn't it?'

"All present at once tendered their congratulations and Colonel Lamont grew enthusiastic. Suddenly the Governor said:

"'Dan, I wish you would telephone the news to the Mansion. Sister will want to hear it. . . .'

"Telegrams now began pouring in, and during the day and evening some 1,500 were received."

That evening Albany was illuminated and the nominee reviewed a parade in which 5000 of his fellow citizens marched, after which he delivered his first message as a national figure:

"Fellow-Citizens: . . . The American people are about to exercise, in its highest sense, their power of right and sovereignty. They are to call in review before them their public servants and the representatives of political parties, and demand of them an account of their stewardship.

"Parties may be so long in power, and may become so arrogant and careless of the interests of the people, as to grow heedless of their responsibility to their masters. But the time comes, as certainly as death, when the people weigh them in the balance.

"The issues to be adjudicated by the nation's great assize are made up and are about to be submitted. We believe that the people are not receiving at the hands of the party which for nearly twenty-four years has directed the affairs of the nation, the full benefits to which they are entitled, of a pure, just and economical rule; and we believe that the ascendancy of genuine Democratic princi-



ples will insure a better government, and greater happiness and prosperity to all the people.

"To reach the sober thought of the nation, and to dislodge an enemy intrenched behind spoils and patronage involve a struggle, which, if we underestimate, we invite defeat. I am profoundly impressed with the responsibility of the part assigned to me in this contest. My heart, I know, is in the cause, and I pledge you that no effort of mine shall be wanting to secure the victory which I believe to be within the achievement of the Democratic hosts.

"Let us, then, enter upon the campaign now fairly opened, each one appreciating well the part he has to perform, ready, with solid front, to do battle for better government, confidently, courageously, always honorably, and with a firm reliance upon the intelligence and patriotism of the American people."

Among the Democrats who had witnessed the nomination at Chicago, the first to reach Albany was the well-known reporter, William C. Hudson. He at once called upon the Governor, and was told that the first move would be the preparation of a campaign document, to embody the outstanding achievements of the candidate's past political career. This Hudson was asked to write, and he at once began the work of studying Mr. Cleveland's state papers and public addresses in search of material.

Daniel Lamont, Francis Lynde Stetson, and other Cleveland leaders were consulted, and when the manuscript was complete, Hudson, with the newspaper man's habit of headlines, searched for a phrase to head the appeal. He recalled the fact that in the Democratic national platform of 1876 had appeared these words: "Presidents, vice-presidents, judges, senators, representatives, cabinet officers—these and all others in authority

are the people's servants. Their offices are not a private perquisite; they are a public trust."

In studying Mr. Cleveland's own speeches and messages, he discovered that the same idea of trusteeship was again and again repeated. In accepting the nomination for Mayor of Buffalo in 1881, Mr. Cleveland had said: "Public officials are the trustees of the people, and hold their places and exercise their powers for the benefit of the people." In his first annual message as Mayor of Buffalo, he had declared: "We are the trustees and agents of our fellow citizens, holding their funds in sacred trust." In accepting the nomination as Governor of New York, he had phrased the idea even more clumsily: "Public officers are the servants and agents of the people, to execute laws which the people have made and within the limits of a constitution which they have established."

Clearly none of these sentences could serve as a headline. Therefore, writes Hudson, "I went at the making of one. . . . Public Office is a Public Trust was the result. . . . It was the dogmatic form of what he had expressed with greater elucidation. . . . I took it to the Governor for his inspection. His eye at once went to the top line and, pointing to it, he asked:

" 'Where the deuce did I say that?'

" 'You've said it a dozen times publicly, but not in those few words,' I replied.

" 'That's so,' he said. 'That's what I believe. That's what I've said a little better because more fully.'

" 'But this has the merit of brevity,' I persisted, 'and that is what is required here. The question is, Will you stand for this form?'

" 'Oh, yes,' replied the Governor. 'That's what I believe. I'll stand for it and make it my own.' "

Within a few hours the country was ringing with



"Grover Cleveland's greatest phrase: 'Public Office is a Public Trust.' " But throughout the campaign, and throughout the remainder of his life, Grover Cleveland continued to express this, his most cherished conviction, not in the words of Hudson's brilliant slogan, but in ponderous phrases of his own which he persisted in considering better because longer.

Mr. Cleveland's nomination aroused again in the hearts of the advocates of reform those hopes which campaign promises had so often deceived. "The Democratic party," declared Carl Schurz, speaking for the reform group called "Mugwumps," "has never presented a candidate whom any friend of good government, Democratic or Republican, could see step into the presidential chair with a greater feeling of security." From the first it was evident that Mr. Cleveland would receive a very large percentage of the votes of reformers of whatever party, although Theodore Roosevelt expressed the opinion, "Civil service is not safer in Mr. Cleveland's hands than in Mr. Blaine's," an opinion which he dramatically defended in an article in the *North American Review* a year later, but subsequently repudiated.

A careful survey of Mr. Cleveland's political career soon convinced the Republican campaign leaders that nothing could be gained by turning public attention in that direction. His record was above criticism. He had administered his public trusts with admirable efficiency. He had never shown a trace of the spirit of the demagogue, nor had he permitted the dictation of party machines, having frankly defied the authority of Tammany Hall and its masterful chief boss. He had, in the most literal sense, administered public office as a public trust, and even their ingenuity could not make a case against him.



For a time they turned to the old sectional issue, the dangers which would follow a too-controlling voice of the solid South. The negroes were warned that the election of a Democrat to the Presidency would be speedily followed by a restoration of slavery. Sectional hostilities which had begun to fade by reason of lapse of time and wise methods of conciliation were eagerly revived. But a new generation had come upon the scene, which could not be greatly moved by the "waving of the bloody shirt."

The tariff issue was then attempted, and special interests summoned to the fight. They responded eagerly, but tariff could not be made to appeal to the mass of voters, as the Democrats had reassured their minds by the platform declaration: "The Democratic party is pledged to revise the tariff in a spirit of fairness to all interests. But in making reductions in taxes, it is not proposed to injure any domestic industries, but rather to promote their healthy growth." They had also been cautious enough to assure voters of their determination to protect the higher rate of wages then prevailing.

In New York, the Tammany organization worked in harmony with the special interests to the advantage of Blaine, until Mr. Hendricks, a good machine Democrat of the old school, was sent to deal with Kelly, when the Tammany machine consented to give a grudging support to the candidate of its own party. That no concession by way of party graft would be made to them by Mr. Cleveland they well knew. During the entire campaign he insisted that there should be no trafficking in offices, no yielding to pressure from machine men. "I had rather be beaten . . ." he wrote to Lamont, "than to truckle to Butler or Kelly. I don't want any pledge made for me that will violate my professions or betray and deceive the good people that believe in me."

The white light of legitimate political criticism having failed, the unprincipled element had recourse to the red light of personal defamation, and the campaign became, as Andrew D. White expressed it, "the vilest political campaign ever waged." When we recall the days of 1800, when Aaron Burr and Thomas Jefferson faced one another in a conflict which threatened civil war; the election of 1824, when Andrew Jackson and his ruthless partisans were fixing upon Clay the false charge of "bargain and corruption"; and the election of 1876, when the nation was on the verge of war over the question whether Tilden or Hayes had been elected, this statement seems extreme. But no one even casually familiar with the details of Mr. Cleveland's first race for the Presidency can doubt that there were excellent reasons for this opinion.

From the first, the Mugwump attacks upon Mr. Blaine were violent and offensively personal. "The Republican National Convention," Carl Schurz declared, soon after the nomination, "has with brutal directness . . . forced upon the country . . . a man whose unclean record it cannot deny and dare not face," words which, re-echoed by many Mugwump speakers, left no doubt as to the answer to the oft-repeated question, "What will George William Curtis and his followers do?" Obviously they intended to parade the shades of old associates whom Mr. Blaine desired forgotten, and to interpret Scotch verdicts as though they had been convictions.

Neither could there be any doubt what the Blaine men would do, in the face of such attacks upon their leader. Under the conditions, the retort courteous could hardly have been expected from politicians intent upon winning for their party the greatest elective office in the world. Unable, however, to point to corresponding questionable incidents in the public life of the Democratic



nominee, they flooded the country with personal slanders concerning his private life, interpreting vague rumor as demonstrated truth, and incidental truth as typical of a life the general rectitude of which was beyond question.

Mr. Cleveland generously attempted to shield his opponent from attacks of a similar character. Upon one occasion, his friends purchased papers to be used as the basis of an attack upon Mr. Blaine's private life. When they were placed in the Governor's hands he tore them into tiny bits, and threw the pieces into the fire, with the remark, "The other side can have a monopoly of all the dirt in this campaign."

But despite Mr. Cleveland's desires to the contrary, scandalous stories were circulated concerning Mr. Blaine's private life, which even the generous efforts of his opponent could not recall. "I am glad you wrote as you did in regard to the Blaine scandal," Mr. Cleveland said to Lamont on August 14th. "I am very sorry it was printed, and I hope it will die out at once." It did not die out, however, and James G. Blaine, whose private life is now admitted to have been above reproach, was paraded in cartoon and story as "the tattooed man"; while Grover Cleveland became, in the hands of unscrupulous slanderers, a man without honor, moral sensibility, or sense of shame.

Unskilled in sophistry and new to the darker ways of national politics, Grover Cleveland faced his accusers, his slanderers, and his judges, the sovereign people, conscious of the general rectitude of his life, and courageously determined to bear the burdens of his sins in so far as guilt was his. When his friend, Charles W. Goodyear, reported that a particularly violent attack was to be made upon him by the enemy press the following day, regarding an incident in his earlier life, and asked what to say



in reply, Cleveland telegraphed: "Whatever you say, tell the truth." And his friends told the truth, echoing his confession from platform, press, and pulpit. They properly denied, however, the inferences which his enemies drew from his confession, insisting and establishing by incontrovertible evidence that in general Grover Cleveland's private life was as creditable as even his enemies admitted his public life to have been.

His opponents next turned their energies to the idea of weakening his hold upon the northern wing of the Democratic party, who resented the unjust accusation, so frequently made, that, by virtue of membership in their party, they had favored disunion. To make it appear that the Democratic candidate, though sound of health and of military age, had been unwilling to respond to Lincoln's call to arms in 1861 seemed certain to bring about the desertion of this element, which was essential to Mr. Cleveland's success. They therefore industriously circulated the story that he had dishonorably escaped service during the Civil War by sending a convict to fight in his place. The effect of this form of attack was soon apparent, especially in Grand Army circles, and every effort was made to get the real circumstances of his exemption from service before the country. The facts were as follows: His two brothers, Richard Cecil and Louis Frederick, had enlisted in the Union Army, having elected Grover to remain at home. According to Mr. George F. Parker, Mr. Cleveland gave him the following account of how the decision was reached:

"When the war came there were three men of fighting age in our family. We were poor, and mother and sisters depended on us for support. We held a family council and decided that two of us should enlist in the United States Army and the third stay at home for the support of

the family. We decided it by drawing cuts. The two long and one short pieces of paper were put by mother in the leaves of the old family Bible. She held it while we drew. My brothers drew the long slips, and at once enlisted, and I abided by my duty to the helpless women."

Later he was drafted, and for the same reason exercised his legal right provided in the Enrollment Act of March 3, 1863, to hire a substitute. The hiring of the substitute instead of asking for exemption was to his credit, as the Enrollment Act contained a clause under which he might reasonably have claimed exemption. But he made no such claim, preferring to answer the call of his country by the payment of money which the law declared the honest equivalent of the personal service which he was unable to give.

In view of these facts, it was not difficult for Mr. Cleveland to justify his conduct to anyone willing to examine a rather complicated set of circumstances. But this could not be expected of the great voting public in the midst of a presidential campaign. The charge was easy to circulate, the refutation extremely difficult. In October, 1884, the junior vice-commandant of the Koltes Post, New York City, sent the Governor a copy of a circular letter, bearing the signatures of two war veterans, and making the charge that Grover Cleveland's substitute was a convict. In response to the vice-commandant's friendly request for a denial, to be circulated over the candidate's own signature, the following answer was promptly returned:

Executive Mansion, Albany, *Oct. 24, 1884.*

MR. GEORGE F. DOGE:

My dear Sir:

Your letter of the 23rd, inclosing copy of a circular issued at Buffalo for distribution to the veteran soldiers



of the State, is received, and I thank you for calling my attention to this new development of political mendacity.

So far as this circular has any reference to me it is in all respects calculated to deceive, and in all prejudicial statements it is absolutely false.

I was drafted the first day the draft was put in operation. Being then assistant district attorney, I had plenty of opportunity to secure a convict substitute with no expense, and, in fact, was urged to do so. I refused, however, and hired a man to go who was a sailor on the lakes, and who had just arrived in port and been paid off. I don't know that he was ever arrested, and I am sure he was not a convict. I borrowed the money to pay him for going as my substitute, and I think before I paid him he had more money than I had. I often heard from him while he was in the service, and I saw him quite frequently after he returned.

If he is alive yet I don't think either of the noble veterans who signed this circular would care to meet him after he had read it.

I know Mr. Lyth and Mr. Oatman, whose names are appended to the circular, and I am astonished to find them in such business.

Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

This seemed to some of Mr. Cleveland's eager supporters a poor method of playing the game. Allowing their candidate to go his own way, they proceeded to hunt up, or make up, a substitute for Mr. Blaine, whose heart, they scornfully declared, "prompted him to rush to the front and dye his hands in the blood of rebels, but whose legs wouldn't move a peg."



The Irish vote in 1884 was, as now, of great importance, especially in the State of New York, and Mr. Blaine was in an advantageous position with reference to it, as his mother was a Roman Catholic. Toward the end of October, after a strenuous speech-making tour in the Middle West, Blaine arrived in New York, where he received, at his quarters in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, a delegation of clergymen, ardent reformers who had refused to follow their Mugwump brethren into the Cleveland ranks. Unfortunately for the candidate whom they sought to serve, their leader, Dr. Samuel Burchard, was primed with an epoch-making address—how epoch-making he little suspected. Blaine seemed to listen, but his mind apparently wandered; for otherwise his trained political judgment would surely have suppressed the orator's finest phrase: "We are Republicans, and don't propose to leave our party and identify ourselves with the party whose antecedents have been Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion."

It was one of those alliterative sentences which should never be allowed to pass without careful inspection. To his sorrow, Blaine failed to inspect it, and it charged the ranks of his Irish Catholic friends and scattered them like "the chaff which the wind driveth away."

"The Burchard accident," writes John Devoy in his pamphlet, 'Cleveland and the Irish,' "occurring at the last moment, turned back just enough of the Irish seceders to give New York by a miserably meager majority to the Mugwumps." "From Rum, Romanism and Rebellion," said the New York *World*, ". . . Mr. Blaine proceeded to a merry banquet of the millionaires at Delmonico's, where champagne frothed and brandy sparkled in glasses that glittered like jewels. The clergymen would have been proud of Mr. Blaine, no doubt, if they had

seen him in the midst of the mighty winebibbers. It was Mr. Blaine's black Wednesday."

Of these incidents the Cleveland press, of course, made the freest possible use, interpreting them in the manner most likely to aid the cause of their candidate; and in New York there was added the wrath of Roscoe Conkling, who cherished a bitter personal hatred of Mr. Blaine, on account of a speech delivered eighteen years before, in which the powerful Senator from New York had been paraded as "a grandiloquent swell" with a "turkey-gobbler strut."

Blaine suffered also by virtue of a labor conflict then raging between the New York *Tribune* and Typographical Union Number Six, the "Big Six," as it called itself. It was a vicarious atonement; for neither Blaine nor his party was directly concerned in the conflict, which had been in progress for many months. The *Tribune* had discharged certain union workmen, and had failed to carry out certain contracts made with the union. As Blaine was the Republican candidate, and as the Republican National Convention of 1884 had refused to repudiate the *Tribune*, its official organ, the "Big Six" declared against Blaine, and worked for Grover Cleveland, influencing, perhaps, enough votes to tip the scale in the close contest in New York State.

When the polls opened the tension of uncertainty pervaded the nation; Democrats and Republicans alike, while openly professing full confidence of victory, secretly entertained forebodings of defeat. And when the polls were closed, and the returns began to be circulated, the uncertainty increased, and with it whisperings of possible things worse even than defeat.

It was soon evident that Cleveland had carried Connecticut, Indiana, New Jersey, and the solid South; but



New York was essential to victory, and her choice remained uncertain. The *Sun*, then a greenbacker, and therefore no friend to Mr. Cleveland, conceded his election; but the Associated Press, which received returns, not by counties but by election districts, insisted that it was a Republican victory. Mr. Cleveland wisely kept his own counsel, and waited for a definite verdict.

Three days later the leading New York City dailies, with the exception of the *Tribune*, agreed that Cleveland had been chosen. Republican politicians, however, accepted the view of the *Tribune*, that Blaine was elected; and the Democrats became alarmed, recalling the election of 1876, when their opponents had snatched victory from their hands by counting out Samuel J. Tilden, the choice of the nation. "Perhaps," they whispered, "that game is to be tried again." When the Republican National Committee, in spite of the inconclusive returns, boldly declared, "There is no ground for doubt that the honest vote of this State has been given to the Republican candidate," hot-headed Democrats talked of violence. The streets of New York took on a dangerously tense atmosphere as the eager crowds, waiting for further returns, called for the hanging of Jay Gould, and manifested other tendencies disconcerting to Blaine's supporters.

Still Mr. Cleveland gave no expression of opinion, and worked at his tasks as Governor as though conditions were normal, allowing no detail of official duty to escape him. On the tenth day after the election, the Republicans were forced to concede the choice of Cleveland. And upon receiving the news, he remarked: "I am glad of it; very glad. There will now be no trouble. If they had not, I should have felt it my duty to take my seat anyhow." His victory at the polls, when all the figures were



in, proved scant indeed. He had carried New York by only 1047 votes, though his supporters insisted that, but for the influence of Blaine's money, this majority would have been at least 50,000.

It is quite evident, however, that the Blaine money was not the only money used in the campaign. The Democrats liberally financed their leaders, as a memorandum preserved among the papers of Colonel Lamont clearly proves. It is dated February 5, 1885, and presents a list of "Contributors to the Campaign Fund of the National Democratic Committee, 1884." The largest single item is: "William H. Barnum, \$27,500." William L. Scott, of Erie, Pennsylvania, is credited with a gift of \$24,000, Cooper-Hewitt \$20,000, Oswald Ottendorfer \$18,000, R. P. Flower and D. Willis James \$16,000 each, William C. Whitney \$15,250, A. P. Gorman \$14,908.25, Daniel Manning, Albany, \$13,675. The memorandum totals \$453,126.61, a large sum for the year 1884; but the list includes no contributions from Grover Cleveland, although a letter to Bissell shows that he contributed at one time \$5,000. "I send you . . . my check on Albany for \$3,500," he wrote on September 11th, "and on Buffalo for \$1,500, making up my subscription to the National Committee." It is, therefore, fair to assume that even the grand total of almost half a million dollars does not tell the whole story of the campaign funds of the Democrats.

Mr. Cleveland's letters, from the date of the first mention of his name in connection with the Presidency, show how fully he realized the burden of responsibility which goes with that office; and after his election, he spoke at times like a doomed man. "I look upon the four years next to come," he wrote to Bissell, in acknowledging his victory, "as a dreadful, self-inflicted penance for the good

of my country. I can see no pleasure in it, and no satisfaction, only a hope that I may be of service to my people."

The first mad rush of triumphant Democrats seeking office appalled him. "I am sick at heart and perplexed in brain during the most of my working hours," he wrote to Bissell, on December 25th. "I almost think the professions of most of my pretended friends are but the means they employ to accomplish personal and selfish ends. It's so hard to discover their springs of action, and it seems so forlorn to feel that on the question as to who shall be trusted, I should be so much at sea. I wonder if I must for the third time face the difficulties of a new official life almost *alone*."

## CHAPTER V

### ALONE IN THE WHITE HOUSE

*"The President, and the President alone, represents the American citizen, no matter how humble or in how remote a corner of the globe."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

A FEW days after his election to the Presidency, while walking with an intimate friend in the outskirts of Buffalo, Mr. Cleveland exclaimed, "Henceforth I must have no friends." From that moment, in his apparently simple personality, men discovered two personalities—the one, as of old, genial and approachable, with a capacity for delightful intimacies; the other, an official self, austere, forbidding. He loved his friends, but when conscious of an attempt to capitalize friendship, to gain executive favors by virtue of personal connections with the President of the United States, the kindly, often humorous, lines of his face hardened into bronze, and he became cold and unapproachable. He would, in such humor, lose a friend or make an enemy without apparent emotion, for his attitude toward appointments was unchangeable: "A personal use of a trusteeship is at war with its spirit, and gratifying myself and my friends by the use of public offices, simply because I have the power to do so, would be malfeasance in fact, though I was accused of it nowhere except in my own conscience."

But though no pressure, however strong, could make him recede from this determination, he gladly paid



tribute to friendship wherever it could be done without sacrifice of these standards. During the winter preceding the inauguration, a distinguished lawyer who had ardently supported his campaign was recommended for the post of Attorney General. He had the backing of many of the new President's intimate associates, and the plea was advanced that one of his near relatives, now dead, had been a law partner of the President in the Buffalo days. But the appeal fell on deaf ears. The President-elect did not consider the candidate the best choice for the high office which he sought, and declined to appoint him. The cry of ingratitude, so often heard by Mr. Cleveland during his troubled days at Washington, was of course raised, but he calmly went his way, to all intents and purposes unmoved by the attacks which in truth deeply grieved him.

Some time later, a friend of the dead partner sought out the latter's grave in a cemetery three hundred miles from Buffalo and found that a handsome monument had been erected over the grave which bore every evidence of regular care and attention. He inquired of a gardener as to who was responsible, and learned that three years before Grover Cleveland had ordered the monument and had set aside a stated sum for the care of the grave. Grover Cleveland, the man, had paid this loving tribute to his dead friend, out of his own purse; but Grover Cleveland, the President, declined to honor a draft upon the people's offices made in his name. And under the stinging charge of ingratitude he did not reveal the secret of that dead friend's grave.

It has been said that a President is known by the appointments he makes. And this is partly true. A small President is likely to choose small men to surround him, unwilling to invite the co-operation of great minds, lest

his own be dwarfed by comparison. As an appointing agent Mr. Cleveland was not inerrant, but his mistakes came from no such petty jealousies. The average of his appointments is high as compared with any executive of his time, nor did he in his choice of men make secret concessions to standards which he was unwilling to profess openly.

He began selecting a Cabinet as soon as the November elections were over, his plan being to allow the names of contemplated appointees to reach the public early, in order that there might be the fullest criticism before they were sent to the Senate for confirmation. Like Lincoln, he had directed his friends to make no bargains which would bind him if elected. Like Lincoln, when elected, he found that bargains had been made which he now felt in honor bound to recognize, even against his own desires.

Bayard, for example, if we may accept the testimony of St. Clair McKelway, he wished to appoint as Secretary of the Treasury; but, these covenants preventing, Bayard was instead made Secretary of State, in which great office he interpreted the best traditions and the loftiest ideals of the nation. After the turmoil of office was over, after Mr. Bayard was dead, his Chief thus recorded his mature estimate of the man whom he had chosen to lead in his first Cabinet: "Nothing good said of Mr. Bayard could be beyond the truth, and his life furnishes the best possible example of patriotic devotion to country and duty." And the American people have very generally accepted that verdict.

William F. Vilas of Wisconsin was among the first to be recommended for a cabinet position. As Chairman of the National Democratic Convention, and Chairman of the Notification Committee sent officially to inform Mr. Cleveland of his selection as the party candidate in



1884, he was distinctly a national figure; and in addition his strength lay chiefly in the great Northwest, where the Democrats were eager to hold the ground already gained. Mr. Cleveland therefore appointed him Postmaster General.

William C. Endicott, whom he chose for Secretary of War, was backed by the Massachusetts Independents. He had been the Democratic candidate for Governor in 1884, and, as a Judge on the Supreme Bench of the state, he had proved his ability, his soundness, and his breadth of view.

For Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Cleveland selected William C. Whitney, who had shown such consummate skill during the campaign in New York that he had come to be looked upon as a Democratic machine politician, in spite of the fact that he had given effective aid to Tilden in destroying the Tweed Ring. He was a man of independent means, excellent education, and high social position, widely known in many and varied circles, including that of the sportsman.

In 1882, while in Syracuse as a delegate to the New York State Democratic Convention, Mr. Whitney had run in to advise with "Dan" Manning as to the best means of defeating Flower for the governorship. As he entered Manning's office, he noticed a large, portly gentleman comfortably seated, and evidently waiting for an interview. Bowing politely, Whitney passed on to Manning's chair, where he urged the latter to unite with the county Democracy of New York and nominate "that man Cleveland from Buffalo." He later learned to his surprise that, at the interview, "that man Cleveland from Buffalo" had himself been present, in the person of the portly gentleman in the chair.

Through the influence of Mr. Tilden, Whitney had



been appointed Corporation Counsel of New York City, in which post he had made a brilliant record. His private fortune, supplemented by his marriage with a daughter of the Standard Oil magnate, Henry B. Payne, enabled him to play politics with a liberal hand, and in 1884 he had been an important member of the inner group which had engineered the Cleveland nomination. His wealth, his connections, and his effective partisan services were, of course, pleaded as reasons against his nomination. But Mr. Cleveland, after carefully examining the situation, felt that Mr. Whitney's appointment was for the best interests of the country, and his name remained on the list despite protests.

For two of the three remaining cabinet posts, the Department of the Interior and the office of Attorney General, Mr. Cleveland turned to the ranks of the late Confederate Government, thereby emphasizing his determination that, so far as his Administration was concerned, there should no longer be a North and a South. Lucius Q. C. Lamar, his choice for Secretary of the Interior, had drafted the Mississippi Ordinance of Secession in 1861, and had served for two years in the Confederate Army. But he had been wise enough to recognize the end when it came, and in his services to his reunited country had won a position which entitled him to recognition as a representative of the new South. The announcement that his name was considered for such a post was a signal for a flood of protests. "As a Union soldier," wrote one protestant, ". . . I beg to remind the President-elect that the Pension Bureau, with its three hundred thousand pension claims of Union soldiers still unsettled, is in this department, and I can imagine what will be said all through the North and at every Grand Army Post over such a selection." The President-elect was himself quite able

to imagine what would be said, but he was not thinking in terms of Grand Army posts, but of a nation reunited after civil war. Lamar remained on the slate, and, as Cabinet officer and later as a Supreme Court Judge, he fully justified the courageous independence which had given him his chance. Of him, Chief Justice Fuller declared: "His was the most suggestive mind that I ever knew."

In the selection of Augustus H. Garland as Attorney General, President Cleveland did even greater violence to the opinions of such men as could not forget, such victors as thought it wise to be ungenerous. Garland, once Governor of Arkansas and now a United States Senator, had been a member of the Confederate Congress. But, like Lamar, he had accepted the verdict of trial by combat, and had worked wisely and effectively toward a reunion of hearts, North and South. "To him," wrote fifty members of the Arkansas Legislature, "we are most indebted for our restoration to an equal place in the Union, and equal representation in the national councils." And Samuel J. Tilden emphasized his fitness for office by expressing the opinion that he ought not to be taken out of the Senate at the beginning of a Democratic administration.

Daniel Manning was selected as Secretary of the Treasury, partly in fulfillment of campaign promises made contrary to Mr. Cleveland's orders, but not entirely so. During the winter and spring following the election, letters urging his appointment had come from many men, representing varied interests and shades of political opinion—bank presidents, lawyers, politicians, journalists. In addition, Mr. Cleveland knew, from personal contact, that Manning was both able and honest, a type of leader whom he delighted to honor. When, therefore, at the



very end of the process of cabinet making, Mr. Cleveland, for the first time, asked Mr. Tilden's opinion, he was quite ready to concede what the latter asked—and Manning, to quote from a letter of Tilden to Watterson, "was coerced into the Treasury." In a letter to McKelway, Manning thus avowed his distaste for the position: "I came here unwillingly in the performance of a duty that carried with it, so far as I am concerned, no tinge of ambition. I shall go on, doing that duty . . . at a very considerable sacrifice, only for the sake of the party, whose principles I inherited and came to love as I grew to the years of manhood. I would very gladly return home, any day, to private life. . . . I shall eagerly welcome the opportunity for such a return whenever it occurs, the sooner the better." Through his close personal relations with Mr. Manning, Mr. Tilden exerted a strong influence upon the financial policies of the Cleveland Administration, and these all looked toward the preservation of the gold standard.

In these cabinet selections, which were complete before Inauguration Day, the President-elect, while showing respect for the varied elements which composed his party, made it quite clear that he sought a truly national body of counselors, men able to think for all sections; for Mr. Cleveland was determined to be no mere party President. It was also a significant fact that among them was not a single man with whom he had been upon terms of personal intimacy.

His choice was satisfactory to the country at large, in spite of the interpretation of a lady who wrote, a few weeks later: "Mr. President Cleveland, I would love to have something from the White House. Please send me scraps of your cravats and your cabinet to make a block in my crazy quilt." Of the many tempting offers of



help which he was obliged to decline, the following is an example, somewhat ambiguous, but undoubtedly sincere: "If you could see your way clear and the right material in a colored man for your Cabinet, you would thereby clinch the lip-service of the Democrats as scouted by the Republicans, and attach the race to the party which would be to the advantage of both."

As Inauguration Day approached, Gold Democrats, especially the old Democratic leader, Samuel J. Tilden, brought pressure to bear to induce Mr. Cleveland to state publicly his determination to maintain the gold standard. To him such a declaration seemed unnecessary, as he was already fully committed to the cause which they had at heart. At length, however, only eight days before his inauguration, at the earnest solicitation of Tilden and other sound money leaders, he consented to sign a letter prepared for him by Manton Marble. He knew, of course, that Presidents often delegate the task of drafting important papers, but it was a practice quite foreign to his own methods, and, although the letter accurately expressed his views, he consented with reluctance:

TO THE HON. A. J. WARNER AND OTHERS, MEMBERS OF  
THE FORTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS:

Gentlemen:

The letter which I have had the honor to receive from you invites, and indeed obliges, me to give expression to some grave public necessities, although in advance of the moment when they would become the objects of my official care and partial responsibility. Your solicitude that my judgment shall have been carefully and deliberately formed is entirely just, and I accept the suggestion in the same friendly spirit in which it has been made. It is also fully justified by the nature of the financial crisis

which, under the operation of the act of Congress of February 28, 1878, is now close at hand.

By a compliance with the requirements of that law all the vaults of the Federal Treasury have been and are heaped full of silver coins, which are now worth less than eighty-five per cent of the gold dollar prescribed as the unit of value in section 16 of the act of February 12, 1873, and which, with the silver certificates representing such coin, are receivable for all public dues. Being thus receivable, while also constantly increasing in quantity at the rate of \$28,000,000 a year, it has followed of necessity that the flow of gold into the Treasury has steadily diminished. Silver and silver certificates have displaced and are now displacing the gold in the Federal Treasury now available for the gold obligations of the United States and for redemption of the United States notes called "greenbacks." If not already encroached upon, it is perilously near such encroachment.

These are facts which, as they do not admit of difference of opinion, call for no argument. They have been forewarned to us in the official reports of every Secretary of the Treasury, from 1878 till now. They are plainly affirmed in the last December report of the present Secretary of the Treasury to the Speaker of the present House of Representatives. They appear in the official documents of this Congress, and in the records of the New York Clearing House, of which the Treasury is a member, and through which the bulk of the receipts and payments of the Federal Government and country pass.

These being the facts of our present condition, our danger, and our duty to avert that danger, would seem to be plain. I hope that you concur with me and with the great majority of our fellow citizens, in deeming it most desirable at the present juncture to maintain and



continue in use the mass of our gold coin, as well as the mass of silver already coined. This is possible by a present suspension of the purchase and coinage of silver. I am not aware that by any other method it is possible. It is of momentous importance to prevent the two metals from parting company; to prevent the increasing displacement of gold by the increasing coinage of silver; to prevent the disuse of gold in the customhouses of the United States in the daily business of the people; to prevent the ultimate expulsion of gold by silver.

Such a financial crisis as these events would certainly precipitate, were it now to follow upon so long a period of commercial depression, would involve the people of every city and every state in the Union in a prolonged and disastrous trouble. The revival of business enterprise and prosperity so ardently desired, and apparently so near, would be hopelessly postponed. Gold would be withdrawn to its hoarding places, and an unprecedented contraction in the actual volume of our currency would speedily take place.

Saddest of all, in every workshop, mill, factory, store, and on every railroad and farm the wages of labor, already depressed, would suffer still further depression by a scaling down of the purchasing power of every so-called dollar paid into the hands of toil. From these impending calamities, it is surely a most patriotic and grateful duty of the representatives of the people to deliver them.

I am, gentlemen, with sincere respect, your fellow-citizen,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Albany, February 24, 1885.

A few days after this letter appeared, Mr. Tilden wrote with complacent brevity:



*Confidential*

Graystone, Yonkers, N. Y.

*February 28, 1885.*

DEAR MR. CLEVELAND:

Your silver letter is absolutely perfect. It is the only silver thing I know of that transmutes itself into gold.

Very truly yours,

S. J. TILDEN.

But it was the last time Tilden was ever able to hold the reins. From this time, while treating the famous ex-party chief with all due courtesy, Mr. Cleveland made it quite evident that he would tolerate no dictation, no controlling influence, a course which caused Tilden to describe him as "the kind of man who would rather do something badly himself than have somebody else do it well." Years later, in a conversation with George F. Parker, Mr. Cleveland referred to the incident and added: "Whether as Mayor, Governor, or President, that was the first and last time I ever signed anything, either enunciating or advocating a policy, which was not written wholly by myself."

In his inaugural address, Mr. Cleveland promised fidelity to sound finance and to civil service reform, justice to the Indian, fair play to the American laborer, and an efficient and honest administration in the interest of all the people.

The oath of office was administered by Chief Justice Waite, who used for the ceremony the little Bible which Mr. Cleveland kept always at hand, and upon the fly-leaf of which appear the words: "My son, Stephen Grover Cleveland, from his loving Mother." Colonel Lamont once said that he had first seen this Bible in Mr. Cleveland's law office in Buffalo. Later it was kept on the

bureau in his bedroom; but while he was President it occupied the upper left-hand drawer of the desk that was presented to the President of the United States by the Queen of England as a memento of the Sir John Franklin expedition to the Arctic regions. Before returning this precious book to the President, the Clerk of the Supreme Court entered this record on the flyleaf: "It was used to administer the oath of office to Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, on the fourth of March, 1885."

The inauguration formalities finished, the Cabinet confirmed, and the departments handed over to their new executive heads, Grover Cleveland began a régime simple enough to delight the heart of a Thomas Jefferson, honest enough to gladden the souls of a George Washington or an Abraham Lincoln, businesslike enough to give a thrill of pleasure to the genius of an Alexander Hamilton, but old-fashioned enough to be, to a generation educated by the modernism of Theodore Roosevelt, almost unbelievable. The President at first had no stenographer, and a single telephone answered the calls of the entire White House establishment. At the end of the regular hours of business, when the clerks and attendants had retired, its imperious summons was often answered by the President himself if William, the steward and general domestic head of the establishment, happened to be out of earshot; for these two shared the distinction of being the members of the establishment who kept no hours. According to Mr. Cleveland's philosophy, all of the President's time belongs to the public, without reservation.

Within the domain of his lawful tasks, William was allowed undisputed sway and he exercised his authority rigorously. Once, when a very young bride and groom were the only guests at the White House, the President,



having noticed a worn and shabby dress suit laid out ready for him to put on, inquired of William why he had not selected a better one. William's laconic reply was: "It is plenty good enough for the occasion." And the President, without further protest, put it on and went down to dinner.

Such encounters were by no means infrequent, but the President had long ago committed himself to the political doctrine of division of powers, and he felt that, after all, William was within his right. Upon one sultry spring evening, the President suddenly became aware of the fact that he was wearing a very heavy winter coat which his factotum had hung on the rack for him. As he mopped his brow, he remarked: "He is the most economical man I have ever known. He is bound I shall get a few more wears out of this coat before the hot weather comes."

The luxurious dinners prepared by the White House *chef* were usually accepted by the President in the same resigned spirit, though he sometimes rebelled, and insisted upon simpler fare. Wine was never served, unless guests were at the table. "What do you suppose I did the other day?" he once asked an intimate friend who was visiting the White House. "We sat down to a very delicious dinner, but it did not appeal to me. All at once, through the open window, there came an old and familiar odor. I said, 'William, what is that smell?' 'I am very sorry, sir,' he replied, 'but that is the smell of the servants' dinner.' 'What is it—corned beef and cabbage? Well, William, take this dinner down to the servants and bring their dinner to me,' I said. And I had the best dinner I had had for months." "*Bœuf corré au cabeau*" was his French for this dish.

When the first of each month came, the President in-



sisted upon performing in person the unnecessary labor of making out checks for personal and household expenses, and going over the accounts with William. If Senators or other dignitaries called at this inauspicious moment, they had to submit to postponement. "I guess I have to take time to pay my bills," he would remark to William, and continue the work.

The glamour of his surroundings impressed him little, except to accentuate his feeling of loneliness, and even this was enlivened by his unfailing sense of humor. "It is nearly one o'clock," he wrote Bissell. "Colonel Lamont is gone and William too. If I did not keep one of the waiters here, I should be absolutely alone in the upper part of the house. That's splendor for you, sleeping alone in the White House."

He was averse to the idea of employing public property for his personal enjoyment, and never made any use of the *Dispatch*, a yacht which had been looked upon as the President's pleasure boat. When he went fishing, as he often did when confronted by any particularly difficult problem, he used a lighthouse tender, and insisted upon paying all expenses out of his private purse.

"The President's life," wrote the Baltimore *Sun* correspondent in July, 1887, "is . . . very much like that of any active business man having large and important interests committed to him. There is a difference, however, in the fact that Mr. Cleveland does an amount of work much in excess of that performed by the average first-class business man.

"The President's whole indoor life is under one roof. He transacts all the affairs of this great nation which come under his jurisdiction separated only by a few feet from the apartments where he eats, sleeps, and is supposed to enjoy his rest. The business man who has an immense

manufacturing establishment, a great railroad, a bank, or other large interests in his hands, no matter how engrossed he may be or how much time he devotes, finds at last the hour when the door of the counting room or the office is closed upon him, and he can go home—home not infrequently miles away, where business and business cares can be shut out, and the tired brain can solace itself in the lighter joys which cluster around the home which is free from invasion. Not so with the President. He is never free from interruption until his head is on his pillow, the lights are out and the doors barred.”

Mr. Cleveland had always been an early riser, and this habit continued at the White House. Eight o'clock in winter, and often a much earlier hour in summer, found him at breakfast, and by nine he was at his desk. From nine to ten he devoted himself to his able and accomplished private secretary, Dan Lamont, later Secretary of War, who understood, far better than did his Chief, the art of disposing of the piles of letters important enough to require the President's personal attention.

Each Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, from ten until one, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from ten to twelve, he received, like the old Roman tribunes of the people, all those demanding an audience, giving precedence, however, to cabinet members, heads of bureaus, and members of Congress. In addition, except in warm weather, he held three public receptions a week, devoting to them nominally the half hour from one-thirty to two; but he invariably insisted that the period should be extended so as not to disappoint anyone who had entered the line before the hour of two. Mondays he reserved for cabinet officers, being on that day accessible to them at any hour.

His regular cabinet meetings were set for noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and they rarely adjourned be-



fore three. In these meetings there were no set speeches, and no votes were taken, the President's theory being that in a cabinet there are many voices, but one vote. Each member was free to express his views; but when the illumination of frank comment and informal discussion was over, it was the President who must make the decision.

Luncheon was a necessity which had to adapt itself to more important matters; but his luncheon hour, in theory at least, was two o'clock, and before three he was back at his desk, disposing of the miscellaneous accumulations of the morning. During those strenuous early afternoon hours, visitors were rigorously excluded, cabinet officers excepted. At five or six, if all went well, it was his habit, often only a theoretical habit, to go out for a breath of air in preparation for dinner at seven. Regular exercise was a human frailty in which he never indulged, even theoretically. During public receptions he was always on his feet, moving from one group to another, and his right arm had scant opportunity to lose its cunning as it daily resisted the grip of a multitude. But within his quarters there were no dumb-bells, Indian clubs, punching-bags, or even masters of massage, and the many stories purporting to be descriptions of the President's exercises to reduce his weight were pure inventions.

A Washington correspondent of the period informs us that the President's breakfast consisted of "rolls and steak, ham and eggs, fish, chops, and coffee, preceded by the fruits of the season, and oatmeal and cream." That he covered the whole of this menu at any one meal is highly improbable, but his selections were undoubtedly generous in scope, as nature had endowed him with a robust appetite and a liking for heavy dishes. This fact was responsible for most of the physical discomforts of



his life. His menu was heavy, his work was heavy, and he took no exercise. He was, therefore, often racked with pains which played agonizingly throughout the broad regions of his vast frame. Had he been more prudent, he might have preserved unimpaired the marvelous constitution with which nature had endowed him, but busy men with perfect constitutions seldom think of such things until too late.

During his first year at the White House, being unmarried, he kept his social engagements at a minimum. Public dinners, with himself as the honored guest, he abhorred, for he hated incense, and despised the semi-intellectual exercise of after-dinner speaking. The evenings he, therefore, almost invariably spent at his desk. He had entered the White House resolved that each day's work should be finished before the hour of retirement, and in consequence that hour not infrequently failed to come at all. His ordinary working day extended till two or three in the morning, but dawn often crept in through the east windows of the White House to find the people's servant still intent upon the people's business.

## CHAPTER VI

### FACING THE POLITICAL BREAD-LINE

*"Reward for partisan activities is one mode of misappropriation of public funds."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

LOUIS XIV once remarked that when he bestowed an office he made one ingrate and an hundred malcontents. The first part of this statement was doubtless unjust, but the second is in the nature of a general proposition, even truer of republics than of autocracies. The expectant official is the pest of politics, the thorn in the side of every President, of whatever character, theory, or party. The poor of politics, he is ever at hand. "His work begins at God knows when, and his work is never through." Lincoln found him almost unbearable. Garfield, after only a brief experience of his persecutions, cried in despair: "My God! what is there in this place that a man should ever want to get into it?" But for Grover Cleveland, the first Democratic Chief Executive since the days of James Buchanan, he provided a fearful testing. From the moment that the electoral colleges were chosen, awaiting neither the formal election of January nor the inauguration of March, he came by the thousands, pleading service, pleading poverty, pleading fitness, advancing every argument which could conceivably affect the mind or stir the emotions of the dispenser of patronage. At times he was blunderingly camouflaged, at times blatant, and often so illiterate as to be almost unreadable.

Here a Congressman urges the appointment of some faithful, incompetent henchman, "not on his account personally, but for the good of the department." There a man asks to be made a minister as "I do not care to lead an idle life," and adds: "Mrs. ———, too, wishes to go abroad as our daughter . . . requires treatment which can be best obtained in Europe." In answering this letter Mr. Cleveland might well have adapted the famous reply of Lincoln to a similar plea: "I'm sorry that there are eight other applicants for that place and they are all sicker than your man." Another, desirous of "a place in the Treasury," and fearful of the miscarriage of the "answer by return of male, because I need the office quick as I have a wife with seven children for support and I am out of menes and money too," enclosed an envelope marked, "in case you could not spel my name correctles I send you a invelope."

Within two weeks of his arrival at the White House Mr. Cleveland had received several hundred such applications for positions, including the following:

My Lord

I, the undersigned come most humbly and most respectfully to the feet of Your Most Gracious Majesty's throne, to offer this humble petition of mine to Your Most gracious Presidential Majesty. . . .

Your Most Gracious Presidential Excellence that so worthily and so gloriously occupying the throne of His forefathers, shines as the brightest star in the Heavens, among the crowned Heads of this World. . . .

Receive me, My Lord, as your soul-son.

Please to train this poor flower in one of your most celestial gardens, to blossom there, till the end of his life.



Dear Mr. President:

Permit me to Salute, Greet, Love and Congratulate you. I have the honor of applying to Your Excellency to a place in the due exercise of your high prerogative to humbly ask Your Excellency for an assignment after your private secretary or a position as Master of Ceremonies, Steward, or Door Keeper. I am a single man and was never married—prematurely Snowy headed and Bearded, I wish to live in Washington and make myself agreeable with everybody that I come in contact with, and will serve you with a perfect heart without vanity, egotism or anything else, with truth, integrity and probity. All I write is strictly true.

To the President:

As old father Time rolls his leaden car along, I learn that it behooves a lady left as a landmark of her posterity, 'mid the worlds' treacherous environments, to turn the leaves that are empowered with intelligence and glistening with embellishment: therefore I am impelled to ask, will our noble President give ear to another applicant for his bounteous aid to position? The humble writer, is an orphan, without kindred—literary by nature.

Der and respctble sir

Thrusting in hope I will be so free to ask your Honor for a situation. I have receive a good eddication. In other respects I am willing to render myself usful. I doubt not but that I shall be able to fulfil any duties assigned him more intelegent than most.

President Cleveland

It is verrey dull out here. There is nothing to enliven things except the possibility of being impaled alive by a live Indian and I dont want to be impaled. I aint

got any money to pay Rail Road fare and I want to get out of this. I thought if you could give me an office, I then could get a pass I voted the Republican ticket last fall but if you think there will be any chance of your being elected another term I will vote for you that is if I get an office.

Dear Sir:

Would you please appoint a man to some good office who has never taken a drink of whiskey in his life and who has never used tobacco in any way or been a politician or swore

Dear Sir:

I have made up my mind to ask you For an Employment if you Have anything that is suitable for a man that never was in the United States business but have filled Lodge Offices Promptly and correct if so as you could acomadate me Mr. Cleveland I will also be dutiful to my Occupation

Dear Sir

I am a young man wich I would like to beter my self. The buisnes I am at is Junk buisness, but I would rather have the buisness in the govment, either in the Cabnet or as watchman

Sur j would like to have the ofice of secetary j think j wold sute you j have a meligant desise all so j have the chills so j cant labor fur my liven. Send me the law so j will no what a secetery will bea.

The old-style Democrats, faithful to the spoils ideal, euphemistically termed "rotation in office," of course demanded a clean sweep. For a quarter of a century the

pleasant fields of Federal patronage had been closed to them, and when now, at last, victory crowned their banners, they eagerly demanded the spoils of victory. The Mugwumps, on the other hand, fearing treason to the pledges and practices which had won their support, insisted that there be no sweep at all.

There was, of course, nothing new in this, for although the first forty years of our history were singularly free from the spoils system, with the coming of Andrew Jackson, "the man of perpetual fury," all this had been changed. Jackson frankly divided the spoils of political victory with his fellow Democrats and established a precedent which successive administrations, Democratic, Whig, and Republican alike, had eagerly followed, till slowly, but with terrible certainty, the partisan conception had grown into a system, generally accepted as an unavoidable incident of popular government.

There had, of course, always been indignant protestants. Calhoun, in 1835, declared: "So long as the offices were considered as public trusts, to be conferred on the honest, the faithful and capable, for the common good, and not for the benefit or gain of the incumbent or his party, and so long as it was the practice of the Government to continue in office those who faithfully performed their duties, its patronage, in point of fact, was limited to the mere power of nominating to accidental vacancies or to newly created offices, and would, of course, exercise but a moderate influence either over the body of the community or over the office holders themselves; but when this practice was reversed—when offices, instead of being considered as public trusts, to be conferred on the deserving, were regarded as the spoils of victory, to be bestowed as rewards for partisan service—it is easy to see the certain, direct, and inevitable tendency . . . to



convert the entire body of those in office into corrupt and supple instruments of power, and to raise up a host of hungry, greedy, and subservient partisans, ready for every service, however base and corrupt."

But Calhoun and the earlier opponents of the system were opponents with no healing prescription, reformers with no organized plan of reform. In politics as in all practical affairs mere idealism, however earnest, accomplishes nothing. To be of value, it must carry with it a definite program which the ordinary citizen can understand, and no such program was brought forward until 1867, when Congressman T. A. Jenckes of Rhode Island, recommended to Congress that certain classes of appointments hitherto regarded as party spoils be henceforth made upon the basis of competitive examination, and that the appointees be given a tenure independent of political changes. From this suggestion there slowly grew up an organized reform movement, and four years later Congress authorized the President to appoint a Civil Service Commission, and to carry out such rules as it might decide upon relative to admission into government employ. With this plan established, civil service reform became a movement to be reckoned with by party leaders.

It fell to General Grant, as President, to choose the first Civil Service Commission; but the clamor of spoilsmen was loud, and the General was no stoic. It was not very long, therefore, before he suspended the operation of the civil service rules, on the ground that Congress, under the leadership of James G. Blaine, refused appropriations requisite for conducting the examinations. Thus the spoils system again flourished like a green bay tree, and again the spoilsmen, in the manner of the slaveholding philosophers of old, wove cunning webs of logic to prove their system "born of God." Immediately after this set-

back a Civil Service Reform Association was organized in New York, with George William Curtis as President. Theodore Roosevelt later became an active member of this association, which soon developed into the National Civil Service Reform League, and set itself the task of educating the people upon the necessity of reform.

Much of the needed education had been already given by the unprecedented corruption of Grant's second term, and the Democratic party had registered its pretended conversion in the national party platform of 1876, which declared: "Reform is necessary in the Civil Service. Experience proves that efficient, economical conduct of the Government business is not possible if its Civil Service be subject to change at every election, be a prize fought for at the ballot box, be a brief reward of party zeal, instead of posts of honor, assigned for proven competency and held for fidelity in the public employ." The Convention of 1880 reiterated these views in words of violence: "We execrate the course of this Administration (Hayes) in making places in the Civil Service a reward for political crime, and demand a reform by statute which shall make it forever impossible for the defeated candidate to bribe his way to the seat of the usurper by billeting villains upon the people."

The assassination of President Garfield at the hands of a disappointed office seeker had further emphasized the need of reform, and a solid foundation for its development was finally laid in the famous Pendleton Act of January 16, 1883, which empowered the President to bring under a merit system such groups of Federal employees as he should decide upon, and prohibited political assessments upon Federal office holders. This law gave hope of speedy regeneration for the public service, and Mr. Cleveland as Mayor of Buffalo, when the Pendleton



Bill was still merely proposed legislation, had freely committed himself to its provisions. As Governor of New York, he had been a tireless worker for reform and, amid conditions discouraging in the extreme, had finally secured a state law requiring the passing of civil service examinations by applicants for office.

In view of these actions, the reformers had worked for his election to the Presidency, and had tipped the balance in his favor; and on December 20, 1884, in order to get his views squarely before the country, the National Civil Service Reform League had asked him to prepare a statement on the subject. Mr. Cleveland's reply is his Civil Service confession of faith:

Albany, *Dec. 25, 1884.*

HON. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS,  
President, &c.

Dear Sir:

Your communication dated December twentieth, addressed to me on behalf of the National Civil Service Reform League, has been received.

That a practical reform in the Civil Service is demanded, is abundantly established by the fact that a statute, referred to in your communication, to secure such a result, has been passed in Congress with the assent of both political parties; and by the further fact that a sentiment is generally prevalent among patriotic people, calling for the fair and honest enforcement of the law which has been thus enacted. I regard myself pledged to this, because my conception of true Democratic faith and public duty requires that this and all other statutes should be in good faith, and without evasion enforced, and because in so many utterances made prior to my election as President, approved by the party to which



I belong and which I have no disposition to disclaim, I have in effect promised the people that this should be done.

I am not unmindful of the fact to which you refer, that many of our citizens fear that the recent party change in the National Executive may demonstrate that the abuses which have grown up in the Civil Service are ineradicable. I know that they are deeply rooted, and that the spoils system has been supposed to be intimately related to success in the maintenance of party organization; and I am not sure that all those who profess to be the friends of this reform will stand firmly among its advocates, when they find it obstructing their way to patronage and place. But fully appreciating the trust committed to my charge, no such consideration shall cause a relaxation on my part of an earnest effort to enforce this law.

There is a class of Government positions which are not within the letter of the Civil Service statute, but which are so disconnected with the policy of an administration, that the removal therefrom of present incumbents, in my opinion, should not be made during the terms for which they were appointed, solely on partisan grounds, and for the purpose of putting in their places those who are in political accord with the appointing power. But many now holding such positions have forfeited all just claim to retention, because they have used their places for party purposes, in disregard of their duty to the people, and because, instead of being decent public servants, they have proved themselves offensive partisans, and unscrupulous manipulators of local party management. The lessons of the past should be unlearned; and such officials, as well as their successors, should be taught that efficiency, fitness and devotion to public duty

are the conditions of their continuance in public place, and that the quiet and unobtrusive exercise of individual rights is the reasonable measure of their party service.

If I were addressing none but party friends, I should deem it entirely proper to remind them that, though the coming administration is to be Democratic, a due regard for the people's interest does not permit faithful party work to be always rewarded by appointment to office; and to say to them that while Democrats may expect all proper consideration, selections for office not embraced within the Civil Service rules will be based upon sufficient inquiry as to fitness, instituted by those charged with that duty, rather than upon persistent importunity or self-solicited recommendations, on behalf of candidates for appointment.

Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

This letter promised reform, but it did not promise the impossible. Even at this early stage of his Federal career, Mr. Cleveland was conscious that his Mugwump friends were preparing to insist that he perform miracles of healing, and he knew that he could perform no miracles. To his severely practical mind the business of government was to seek increased efficiency, and to that end honesty and ability on the part of all officials were essential. But to reverse this order, as some of the reformers demanded, and make of government a sort of moral crusade, he felt to be unwise, deeply as he resented the spoils system in all of its aspects.

As Francis Lynde Stetson expressed it, "If, upon the accession of President Cleveland, he had found, as he did find, every appointive office in the possession of a Republican, and if he had found, as he did not find,



every one of these incumbents to be fully competent and worthy . . . it is inconceivable that he should have been expected to reappoint all of such officers upon the expiration of their terms. He had never given any promise or pledge with reference to reappointments, and the principle of civil service reform would have become odious to the great mass of the people had it been so practically applied as to indicate that it was intended to continue exclusion from office of all members of the Democratic party."

Mr. Cleveland planned to be, not a civil service reformer with Democratic tendencies, but a President of the United States, believing in civil service principles. "Those who have complained," he once declared, "have entertained a very different understanding of what is meant by civil service reform from that which the law required me to observe and that it was practicable to carry out. The President is clothed with many and various responsibilities. He is expected, primarily, to do all in his power to secure good government. That imposes upon him the exercise of discretion in making many appointments. It is admitted that in filling many places the importance of securing persons in sympathy with the political views of the dominant party is properly to be considered. My civil service friends have sometimes seemed to think that the Government was to be conducted merely for the purpose of promoting civil service reform. To me the importance of general administrative reform has appeared to be superior to the incidental matter of civil service reform. Good government is the main thing to be aimed at. Civil Service Reform is but a means to that end."

A few days after his inauguration he received a long letter from Carl Schurz reminding him, in specific terms, of what the reformers expected, and ardently pleading



for the retention of the Republican Postmaster of New York: "The reappointment of Mr. Pearson," the letter declared, "is . . . regarded as a test of your policy." By failing to keep him in his position, you "would disappoint the hopes of those of your supporters who have the success of your endeavors to reform abuses and to purify the political atmosphere, most earnestly at heart. They cordially appreciate the noble resistance you have offered to the pressure of the spoils politicians, and they would be much pained at seeing that record blurred. . . . Owing . . . to the fact that your performances have always gone beyond your formal promises, public expectation is now higher than it has ever been before. . . . If now, in spite of your own inclination . . . considerations of a partizan character . . . maintain their ascendancy, keeping the field open for a future revival of spoils politics, the disappointment would indeed be great." Doubtless Mr. Cleveland was better able than even Mr. Schurz to estimate the effect of such a policy, as he had cautiously presented the problem to the public, through inspired leaders in the press, and had watched the reaction, a practice quite common with him.

The effect on the spoilsmen had been immediate and violent. One wrote to Lamont: "You are aware of the President's civil reform declarations and the amount of capital the Republican papers and members of the party are making out of it. . . . Not less than twenty of our best workers here, come right out and say, if Mr. Cleveland proposes to retain the republicans that are in office, throughout his administration, they will go back on the party forever. I have no doubt but what this same feeling exists throughout the state. . . . Should Mr. Pearson be reappointed Postmaster in N. Y. City, it would make

the greatest commotion, and would cause the loss of not less than 10,000 votes in this state."

A few days after this letter was written, the wily Tammany leader, John Kelly, wrote to Charles P. Britton: "I am under the impression that President Cleveland will be successful in administering the Government of the United States, as he undoubtedly was in discharge of the duties of the office of Governor of this State. He is calm, dignified, thoughtful, and acts after mature deliberation. Besides, he possesses the qualification of listening, and saying but very little, although he is very agreeable, social and is fond of interchanging views and opinions as any person can be holding the dignified and important position of President of the United States. Of course it is a great gift to be able to listen and analyze and draw conclusions from what may be said of him by the various persons who appeal to him, from time to time, for place or favor of some kind."

Evidently Mr. Kelly felt that Tammany must adopt a course different from that pursued in the case of Senator Grady, if they were to get their part of the spoils of victory. At the end of the letter, clearly designed for transfer to the President's own hand, Kelly added this sentence, eloquent when taken in connection with the idea of Mr. Pearson's reappointment as Postmaster of New York: "Besides, his (the President's) ambition is not so great as to inaugurate measures that would cause great discussion and violent opposition. I wish him every success in life, and hope that he may succeed in discharging the duties of the Presidency of this country to the entire satisfaction of the people."

In view of the threat that by persisting in Mr. Pearson's reappointment the President would lose "not less than 10,000 votes" in New York, Mr. Kelly's plan was



adroit; and, as the Tammany leader had doubtless expected, Mr. Britton promptly sent Kelly's neat words of praise to Lamont, with the following suggestive comment, bearing date, March 22, 1885: "I note by the papers that Mr. Kelly is in Washington to-day . . . and I presume he will call at the White House. . . . I trust that both you yourself and the President will receive him with great cordiality, for I assure you from positive knowledge that *personally* he *desires it*, and he is just the man (and I presume in just the state of mind) to *appreciate* magnanimity on the part of President Cleveland, and this too without a thought as regards patronage for his henchmen. For them, individually or collectively, I care nothing; but for him, personally, I have great respect. I *know* what he did for us during the campaign against an opposition that would have crushed an ordinary man. . . . *It is of the utmost importance to us, in our future work, that the entente cordiale be established at once between the President and Mr. Kelly.*"

But neither the consideration of 10,000 votes in New York, nor the sweet reasonableness of John Kelly could save the New York Post-office for the Democrats. Pearson's name went to the Senate, and to the press went the following inspired leader, the manuscript of which is in Mr. Cleveland's own hand:

"A gentleman very near the President and undoubtedly speaking from actual knowledge, reports that the reappointment of Mr. Pearson was made after a most patient examination of all the facts connected with the charges against him and his answer to the same, which was yesterday submitted and read by the President. The appointment therefore may be considered a complete vindication of the postmaster.



“It is further stated that the reappointment of Mr. Pearson will constitute a notable exception to the course which the President may be expected to pursue. The New York post-office is the largest and most important in the country and of interest to all the people and especially to the vast business enterprises centered in the metropolis. It is to-day a complete illustration of the successful application of civil service reform principles to an immense governmental establishment. This condition has been brought about very largely by the intelligent effort of Mr. Pearson, and he is thus identified in the closest manner with this example of the success of the reform. To retain him insures faith and confidence in the movement, which would receive a shock from his removal. His retention was earnestly requested by a large number of business men of the city, both Democrats and Republicans, and very generally by the Independent Republicans who did such good service in support of the Democratic candidates in the last campaign.

“This act of the President must not be regarded as indicating that in other cases those opposed to the party of the President will either be appointed or retained after the expiration of their terms of office.

“In answer to the suggestion that the reappointment of Mr. Pearson might cause great dissatisfaction in the ranks of his party, the President is represented as saying: ‘The Democratic party is neither hypocritical, unpatriotic or ungrateful—they will understand the whole matter and be satisfied.’ ”

At each new venture along the line of reform, to which not he alone but his party, was committed, similar protests poured in upon him; but they failed to dominate him. Some old political supporter would find his appli-

cation for a minor Federal appointment denied on the ground that it was covered by the civil service law. This he could endure; but when he saw an active secretary of a Blaine and Logan club, whose name happened to stand high on the eligible list, awarded the coveted post by the President whom he had helped to elect, his submission was turned to rage, which rage was not lessened by the Republican taunt, "You got your President, but you can't get your Postmaster." Nor was the fact that the taunt was true calculated to make disappointed Democrats love the grim figure in the White House, who was heroically facing the task which they had assigned him.

The more radical reformers, headed by Schurz, continued to urge him to "aim straight at the non-partisan service," but, in so urging, asked more than could have been reasonably expected. Mr. Cleveland believed that the chief object of civil service reform is not to prevent removals from office, but to supply a body of competent persons, tested by examinations, from whom appointments can be made. He believed that if the incompetent should be weeded out there would be ample opportunity to gratify the natural desires of the Democrats for recognition, without dropping any, of whatever party, who had shown special fitness for their places. This was a perfectly fair standard, and one which could be adhered to without complete disregard of party obligations. Chosen by a party which had known, not seven lean years, but more than two lean decades, Mr. Cleveland knew that a purely non-partisan plan for the distribution of patronage would mean suicide in office and a fruitless administration.

At times he made serious mistakes, or was led into error, but in the light of new evidence he did not hesitate to reverse his decisions, offend whom it might. Not long



after he had ordered the appointment of James Blackburn of Kentucky as Collector of Internal Revenue, his attention was called to a letter written by Mr. Blackburn during the war:

Abingdon, Va., *October 2, 1861.*

MY DEAR WIFE,

I have left you and our children in the land of the despot, but God grant that I may soon be able to make the Union men of Kentucky feel the edge of my knife. From this day I hold every *Union traitor* as my enemy, and from him I scorn to receive quarter, and to whom I will never grant my soul in death; for they are *cowards* and villains *enough*. Brother Henry and I arrived here without hindrance. I have had chills all the way, but I hope to live to kill forty Yankees for every chill that I ever had. I learn that Hardee is still in the Arkansas lines, inactive, and if this proves true I will tender my resignation and go immediately to Kentucky. I hope that I will do my duty as a rebel and a free man. Since I know the *Union men* of Kentucky, I intend to begin the work of murder in earnest, and if I ever spare one of them may hell be my portion. I want to see Union blood now deep enough for my horse to swim in.

Your husband,

JAMES BLACKBURN.

The President sent for some of Blackburn's friends to inquire if the letter as printed was authentic, and found that it was admitted to be genuine. He then consulted with the members of the Cabinet, and the order was given to cancel the appointment. Mr. Blackburn's friends and political sponsors pleaded, clamored, threatened, but in vain.



That he was sincere will hardly be doubted by one who has read the following letter, written not for public perusal, not for campaign use, but for the eyes of a trusted and beloved friend, Wilson S. Bissell:

Executive Mansion, Washington.

*June 25, 1885.*

DEAR BISSELL:

It is nearly 12. o'clock. Lamont just brought in your letter (we have a mail at 11 o'clock now) and after reading it, I have put aside my work to reply.

Somehow this letter has impressed me with the suspicion that in one quarter at least there is an idea that I owe something to friends for political aid, which I am not ready enough to acknowledge. Perhaps this is true. At all events I tell you now, with the utmost sincerity, that I cannot rid myself of the idea that I owe so much to the country, that all other obligations shrink almost to nothingness before it—though I must confess that sometimes I am much comforted by the reflection that I may serve the country well and still serve my party. My ability to do either of these things depends of course upon the approval of the people. The people I have to deal with—that is the people of the country—are not perhaps just what I wish they were, and they perhaps have ideas which are not useful or correct, but their ideas to a very great extent must be met or my efforts to do good must miscarry.

Your letter indicates that you appreciate partly the extent and perplexity, as well as the delicacy of my work. For three months I have stood here and battled with those of my party who deem party success but a means to personal advantage. They have been refused and disappointed; and you are able to-day to write as you do, that

my administration is strong and popular, because those thus refused and disappointed cannot say that I have refused them in order to make place for personal friends, and have bestowed patronage in payment of personal political debts.

I have often thought how solemn a thing it is to live and feel the pressure of the duties which life—the mere existence in a social state—imposes; but I have never appreciated the thought in its full solemnity till now. It seems to me that I am as much consecrated to a service, as the religionist who secludes himself from all that is joyous in life and devotes himself to a sacred mission.

I think you know how much of all that has had anything of comfort in my life has grown out of my love for my friends and the hope that I had earned some real unselfish attachments. And if, in carrying my present burden, I must feel that friends are calling me selfish and doubting my attachment to them and criticising the fact that in the administration of my great trust I am not aiding them, I shall certainly be unhappy, but shall nevertheless struggle on. The end will come; and if on that day I can retire with a sure consciousness that I have done my whole duty according to my lights and my ability, there will be some corner for me where I can rest.

You must not think that I am always blue and always unhappy. In the midst of all I have to do, daily and hourly come the assurances from the people in all parts, that they are satisfied and pleased. If I could only, by giving up all I have or expect, liquidate the debts and obligations to my friends, a terrible load would fall from my shoulders. You say they were very few and could be counted upon the fingers of one hand. I am sure five thousand have claimed that they were spent in my behalf to an extent that can never be compensated. What a nice



thing it would be if my *close* friends could see a compensation in my successful administration.

Of one thing you may be certain. I shall bear with me to my dying day a heart full of gratitude for all that you have done for me.

Yours faithfully,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

He was painfully conscientious in searching for the best candidates for office and painfully alert to avoid misrepresentations. "I have fallen into the habit lately of wrestling very hard with this cursed office-filling in my dreams," he wrote to Charles W. Goodyear, on June 16th. And, a month later, he describes himself as "pitching about half asleep and half awake, trying to make postmasters." But despite his caution, he was occasionally misled, at times deliberately, by men who wished either to accommodate friends, or to shift the burden of refusal to the President's shoulders. To one such, who had ventured to express surprise at the appointment of a candidate whom he had himself thus recommended, the President wrote, in unmeasured condemnation:

Executive Mansion, Washington,  
*August 1, 1885.*

DEAR SIR:

I have read your letter of the 24th ult. with amazement and indignation. There is but one mitigation to the perfidy which your letter discloses, and that is found in the fact that you confess your share in it. I don't know whether you are a Democrat or not; but if you are the crime which you confess is the more unpardonable. The idea that this administration, pledged to give the people better government and better officers, and engaged in a



hand-to-hand fight with the bad elements of both parties, should be betrayed by those who ought to be worthy of implicit trust, is atrocious; and such treason to the people and to the party ought to be punished by imprisonment.

Your confession comes too late to be of immediate use to the public service, and I can only say that while this is not the first time I have been deceived and misled by lying and treacherous representatives, you are the first one that has so frankly owned his grievous fault. If any comfort is to be extracted from this assurance you are welcome to it.

Yours truly,  
GROVER CLEVELAND.

The pressure for office coming from his Buffalo friends was hardest to bear, and their complaints caused him keen distress, but they did not cause him to swerve from the rigid standards of public duty which he had set himself. To Charles W. Goodyear he thus unburdened his heart:

Executive Mansion, Washington.  
*Aug. 6, 1885.*

DEAR CHARLEY:

I return you Bissell's letter, and am exceedingly surprised at it, as also by the statement in your letter, that you have wanted to tell me "of —, —, —, —, and others who were your (my) warm hearted friends," etc., etc. I think I understand it; and the truth that I have been attempting to crowd back, is forced upon me. What have these friends to complain of?

Has — made up his mind that he is justified in withdrawing his friendship, because he was not appointed as a member of the Cabinet or Consul to London? These two things he will see some day were impossible; and

from one he withdrew himself. I would not demean myself to speak of the pleasure it has given me to do every other thing which I thought he wanted.

Is —— offended because I forgot to insist in the Cabinet (and I would not have done it if I had remembered it) that the banking business should be continued in the hands of the most pronounced Republicans, who were fleecing the Government right and left?

Has —— ceased to be a friend because I did not appoint him to a place in the diplomatic service, and thus offend my party and give the lie to my declaration that the administration was to be Democratic, and weaken myself by giving public places to reward personal friends?

Has —— made up his mind that our long friendship should be broken and interrupted, because I did not insist upon his taking the Paris Consulship, or because I am now hesitating about an attempt to find something of personal and professional interest to him, which I am convinced by my present lights ought not to be done?

I can think of nothing else which should interfere with the relations I have been so delighted to maintain with these gentlemen. Of all the 60,000,000 people in the country, high or low, my Buffalo friends when here have been treated with the utmost consideration and hospitality, so far as I have been able to do it, and so far as my knowledge of proper and handsome treatment went. It may be that public business has prevented my devoting as much time to them as I desired, but I did the best I could.

I have been here five months now, and have met many people who had no friendship for me, and were intent on selfishly grabbing all they could get, without any regard to the country, the party or to me; but I have man-



aged to get along with them apparently as well as with my Buffalo friends. And now I am done. I feel sick at heart. I don't want to let these friends go; but I am tired of this beating about the bush and all this talk about "second-handed invitation" and "holes in a plank" and that sort of thing. If people lie in wait for me to discover things that may be construed into slights and offenses, they will find plenty of them. I am not much on my guard with friends.

I have no complaints to make. Of course I thought it a little strange that with the hundreds of invitations, to visit hundreds of places during my vacation, my friends in Buffalo did not seem to care to see me; but I am not going to say that I can get along without Buffalo or Buffalo friends. I care much—very much—for the latter. But by God! I have something on hand here that cannot be interfered with; and if my Buffalo friends or any other friends cannot appreciate that, I can't help it.

I am getting in that condition where any demonstration of kindness touches me deeply; and therefore I thank you for your kind words and offer to attend to any matter for me in Buffalo.

I hope to receive the tin box very soon; and after that I will try to be real good and make as little trouble as possible.

For God's sake, Charley, don't think that I am [in] any way out of sorts with you.

Yours faithfully,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Such a letter, certainly unjust in many of its implications, and that to men whom he really loved, showed that nerves were giving the danger signal, and he eagerly welcomed the long-looked-for vacation in the woods, with the



leaping trout, the rippling streams, and the soothing comradeship of Dr. Bryant, his devoted physician and still more devoted friend.

Thanks to Lamont's scrapbook, the following Presidential movie of a Cleveland fishing trip is preserved. It was written by a Chicago *Tribune* reporter on August 21, 1885, and shows Mr. Cleveland at play:

"‘I think,’ said the Doctor, as he and the President emerged from the tent after luncheon, ‘that we can’t do better than try the pools up the creek for pickerel. I saw a big fellow lurking under the shadow of the bank yesterday, and I’m confident we shall have sport. It’s a good afternoon for fishing. What do you say to it, Mr. Cleveland?’

"‘I don’t believe we can do better, Doc,’ was the reply.

"The two shouldered their poles and started off up the creek. Arriving at what seemed a likely spot for pickerel, the question of what bait was best came up, and the Doctor advocated live frogs. ‘I know you object to killing an old bullfrog,’ he explained, ‘because of your sentiments expressed yesterday, but the kind we shall use for bait will be the little brown hoppers. If there’s anything a pickerel just delights in, it’s a small, fresh frog.’

"Two active little frogs were easily caught, the hooks were baited by passing the steel through the skin on the frogs’ back, leaving them alive and with power of movement, and then, seating themselves on the bank a few yards apart, the President and the Doctor began fishing. Little was said, and each, lighting a cigar, smoked away placidly awaiting a bite. It was not long before there was a rush in the water, a swirl, a struggle, and a little later the Doctor had landed a fine pickerel on the sward behind him. The President looked enviously at the dappled

sides of the fish and watched his own line with increased interest, but it did not stir. Again and again was the Doctor successful, but his companion had no luck. The hours passed, but the President caught no fish. He became listless.

“ ‘I don’t see how it is, Doc,’ said he finally, ‘that you catch so many fish while I don’t get even a nibble. I used to be a successful fisherman when I was a boy. Ah, those were good times!’ and he sighed deeply. ‘Dinner always had a relish in those days, and there was enjoyment in everything. I can see it now—the hard, white road, winding between green fields, and the wooden bridge over the creek in the hollow. There were always fish in the deep water under the bridge and in the pools above and below it. We fished with pin hooks, we boys, and we brought out every fish with a yank, to prevent his falling off the hook, but we generally had good luck. I know I always went home with more chubs and shiners than they liked to cook.

“ ‘It was a triumphal march home with my catch, up the long clay road and into the front yard—why don’t they have such front yards nowadays?’ he soliloquized. ‘There is a fashion in country front yards, imported from New England, I think. There was a plank or gravel walk from the gate up to the front door, and on either side of the walk were the flowers—not such flowers as are raised now, but old-fashioned flowers. There were larkspurs and a bed of China asters, and then one of the old style of pinks, next to a great bunch of phlox, and then dahlias. Up against the house would be hollyhocks, and between them, at their feet, “bouncing Betty’s” and “old hen and chickens.” Oh, I know those old-fashioned gardens! But’—and here he suddenly recollected himself—‘I haven’t had a bite yet, and you’ve caught a lot more



pickerel! I've got the same kind of frog on my hook that you have. Why don't they bite at him? By the way, there's a good frog for bait on that stump across the creek. See it, Doc?"

" 'That's so,' said the Doctor; 'I believe if you had that fellow on your hook the pickerel would bite.'

" 'I'm going to try to get him,' said the President, and he began to reel in his line preparatory to crossing the creek at a shallow place further up. The line became gradually taut, though the President did not at first notice it, his eyes being fastened on the frog, until that little animal began to scramble and cling to his perch for dear life, as if something were pulling at him. The President, in astonishment, stopped reeling, and by a coincidence the frog appeared at peace again. The President looked at his pole, then along his line, then at the Doctor, then back to the frog. A light dawned upon him. He uttered a single word:

" 'Jehoshaphat!'

" 'What is it?' exclaimed the Doctor. 'What's the matter?'

" 'Don't speak to me,' replied the President. 'I'll be hanged if that isn't my frog on the stump! He's swum across and climbed the stump, hook and all, and here I've been sitting waiting on him all the afternoon—waiting for pickerel to bite! Great Scott!'

"The sympathizing Doctor crossed the creek and prepared to toss the frog and hook back into the water, but the President said he guessed he wouldn't fish any more that day. The frog was released with all care, and subsequently tossed into a puddle.

" 'I don't blame him much,' said the President. 'I ought to have attended to business. I've been day-dreaming.' "



Perhaps daydreams were not unnatural in a President who had just escaped for a time the eager political bread-line, and knew that he must soon return, not to it alone, but to the as yet untried business of dealing with Congress.

It was his physical salvation, during the trying years of conflict that followed, to be able, when the strain grew unbearable, to take down his beloved rod, or sling over his shoulder his shotgun—modestly named “Death and Destruction”—and seek the restoring balm of God’s glorious solitude. They might slander him, as they did; they might trick him with cunning, deceive him with lies, torture him with reproaches of ingratitude and of unfriendliness to friends; but no one could rob him of his duck marshes, or prevent the shy trout and agile blue-fish from turning his mind away, for a time, from all worries. God made him a sportsman, and the instinct served him as the protective coloring serves the wild things in the great, free world of outdoors.

Early in September he returned to the White House, conscious that the clamor for office had not diminished nor would for many weary months. His heart had been lightened, however, by the discovery, made during the summer, that he was mistaken in his judgment concerning his Buffalo intimates of whose unfriendliness he had so bitterly complained to Goodyear. As soon as he reached his desk he wrote acknowledging that misjudgment and, incidentally, recorded his general distaste for the life of a President:

“I feel that I am in the treadmill again and look forward to the time when another respite shall be due to me and all that must take place between now and then with the gravest concern. If it were not for the full faith I have in the Higher Power that aids honest, faithful endeavor, I should be frightened by all I see before

me. But I have not a particle of real fear, though I confess to anxiety, because so much depends upon me. It's a curious state of mind to be in, when all the value of life is measured by its relation to other persons and other things, and when the natural desire to live for the sake of living and enjoying life is nearly gone."

In his absence, King Leopold of Belgium had sent him a formal announcement that the mandatory of the Congo, which the Powers had recently conferred upon Belgium, "will hereafter form the independent state of the Congo," and that he had "taken . . . the title of Sovereign" of that new state. Mr. Cleveland's reply was a formal recognition of conditions in the creation of which he had had no part, and for the cruel and unforeseen outcome of which, "the horrors of the Congo," he can be held in no degree responsible.

ESTEEMED AND GREAT FRIEND:

I have had much pleasure in receiving your Majesty's letter of the 1st of August last, announcing that the possessions of the International Association of the Congo will hereafter form the Independent State of the Congo, and that your Majesty, under the authorization of the Belgian Legislative Chambers, and in accord with the association, has assumed the title of Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo. I observe your Majesty's further statement that the convention between Belgium and the new State is exclusively personal. This government at the outset testified its lively interest in the well being and future progress of the vast region now committed to your Majesty's wise care, being the first among the Powers to recognize the flag of the International Association of the Congo as that of a friendly State;



and now that the progress of events has brought with it the general recognition of the jurisdiction of the association and opened the way for its incorporation as an independent and sovereign State, I have great satisfaction in congratulating your Majesty on being called to the Chief Magistracy of the newly formed government.

The Government and people of the United States, whose only concern lies in watching with benevolent expectation the growth of prosperity and peace among the communities to whom they are joined by ties of friendship, cannot doubt that under your Majesty's good government the peoples of the Congo region will advance in the paths of civilization and deserve the good-will of all those States and people who may be brought into contact with them.

I am, my esteemed and great friend, your faithful friend.

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Done at Washington, this 11th day of September, 1885, by the President.

T. F. BAYARD,  
Secretary of State.

Once more in harness, the President again faced the political bread-line. The Pendleton Law already covered some thirteen thousand five hundred offices, but there remained subject to Mr. Cleveland's appointment forty-nine thousand fourth-class postmasters, and five thousand miscellaneous posts mostly packed with Republicans. For each there were at hand many expectant Democratic officials, backed by not less expectant Democratic politicians hunting votes. These were they who



had ranted on the stump, organized gigantic torchlight parades, "gathered the coin," or fed the columns of a party press during the late campaign. They could see no excuse for a President who would not fill vacancies with the faithful, or make vacancies where none existed, and shrieked traitor at each non-partisan appointment, however excellent.

On the other hand, Republicans who had fed the fires of personal slander, had cheered themselves hoarse at the mention of the name of James G. Blaine, and had ransacked the political garbage cans for new filth to hurl at the then Governor of New York, loudly cried hypocrite at each removal, however necessary, while despite his honest and persistent fight for reform against an increasingly powerful faction in his own party, many even among civil service reformers looked upon the President as a betrayer of their confidence, a wolf in sheep's clothing, a champion spoilsman camouflaged. This was his penalty for leadership of a party not yet regenerate. Over and over again his friends broke party pledges in the belief that the President would never know. They made partisan removals in such numbers as to justify the complaint that the Democrats were no more attached to reform than the Republicans had been, and the reckless manner in which Congressmen, Senators, and others high in office lent their names to undesirable candidates caused the President to wonder whether any recommendation could be considered of value. "The Vice-President, and at least half the Democratic Senators, and nearly all the Democrats of the House," commented the *Commercial Gazette*, "[have] banded themselves together to break down the President and his Cabinet, and force him to do their bidding. . . . The first surprise of the President

was as nothing compared with his amazement over the later features of the office-seekers' raid."

Yet the more judicial reformers knew that he was reforming, slowly, cautiously, practically, but really; working as one who knows the limitations of executive power must work if permanent results are to be attained. "Since the spoils system was first generally introduced into our national administration," wrote George William Curtis, after watching the new President for only five months, "no President has given such conclusive evidence both of his reform convictions and of his courage in enforcing his convictions as Grover Cleveland." And, during the same summer, Gladstone remarked to Theodore L. Cuyler, who was visiting England: "Cleveland is the noblest man that has filled the Presidential chair since Lincoln."

The President's frank and uncompromising methods made for him relentless enemies who, in various sections of the country, poured vitriol into a personally conducted press, causing it to produce many stories more interesting than authentic. In turn, he generalized too freely, and his sweeping denunciations appealed to the *esprit de corps* of editors, disposed, and not unjustly, to resent blanket indictments of their order. They busied themselves making and printing collections, built on the line of modern three-foot shelf libraries, to show the public "how the people's President slanders the people's press." The newspaper clippers, who in those days were employed to make presidential scrapbooks, filled volumes with their gleanings, letters many of which the President had written for private, not public eyes.

One example, which the newspapers spread broadcast over the country, will suffice to show why Grover Cleveland was not beloved of the press:



TO JOSEPH KEPPLER, ESQ.,  
New York City.

My dear Sir:

I just received your letter, with the newspaper clipping which caused you so much annoyance.

I don't think there ever was a time when newspaper lying was so general and so mean as at present, and there never was a country under the sun where it flourished as it does in this. The falsehoods daily spread before the people in our newspapers, while they are proofs of the mental ingenuity of those engaged in newspaper work, are insults to the American love for decency and fair play of which we boast.

I hasten to reply to your letter that the allegation contained in the slip you send me, to the effect that you ever asked a personal favor of me, is entirely and utterly false. You have never in the slightest manner indicated a wish, claim, or preference touching any appointment to office, or any official act of mine, and the only occasion I remember when I ever had any conversation with you was during a short and very friendly call you made upon me in Albany, during my term as Governor. If I ever received a letter or message from you on any subject I have forgotten it—a thing I should not be apt to do.

While I am sorry that any friendliness you may have felt or exhibited for me has been the cause of embarrassment to you, I cannot refrain from saying that if you ever become a subject of newspaper lying, and attempt to run down and expose all such lies, you will be a busy man, if you attempt nothing else.

Hoping that the denial which I send is sufficiently explicit, I am

Yours very sincerely,

GROVER CLEVELAND.



Under such conditions it is not remarkable that the public was for a time deceived concerning the real nature of the man whom they had chosen President, and that the slanders of the campaign of 1884 were kept alive in the minds of the people. His critics, for the most part, either failed to understand what he had promised, were misinformed as to his actions, or intentionally misrepresented him. By refusing to go to one extreme with the reformers, he lost their confidence; by refusing to go to the other extreme with the spoilsmen, he lost theirs. But he yielded to neither, considering that his duty lay between, in which position he became the target of both.

The months, as they passed, brought no cessation of the conflict. "All this time, like a nightmare," he wrote to Charles Goodyear, "this dreadful, damnable office-seeking hangs over me and surrounds me," and to Bissell he used even stronger language: "The d—d everlasting clatter for offices continues . . . and makes me feel like resigning and hell is to pay generally."

The Bacon-Sterling case, which had just been disposed of and which had irritated the President for the past three months, was responsible for a considerable part of the exasperation which this letter expresses. It had begun late in the summer when Hedden, Collector of the Port of New York, removed Captain Bacon, chief weigher of the Brooklyn customs district, with a service of sixteen years behind him, and put George H. Sterling, a local political leader, in his place, without requiring of him a civil service examination, the Commission having ruled that one was not necessary for appointment to the post of weigher. Sterling was believed by the reformers to be the man of "Boss" McLaughlin of Brooklyn, who in turn rejoiced in the title "political henchman of David B. Hill." The office was politically important

as it controlled over three hundred laborers with votes, and a mayoralty campaign was on in Brooklyn.

"The change," commented the *New York Times* of September 16, 1885, "has no apparent motive except the control of laborers' votes by a Democratic weigher." The *Evening Post*, the *World*, the independent papers of Boston, and many others, also loudly condemned the act, and civil service reformers, Democratic, Republican, and Mugwump alike, without stopping to investigate, raised an indignant protest. Henry Ward Beecher wrote to the President: "The ousting of Capt. Bacon and the appointment of Sterling in his place, is most unfortunate for all who desire to work with you, in a purification of government. A faithful soldier, and a singularly honest and efficient man displaced by a pot-house politician, himself a liquor dealer!—It disgusts all temperance men, it wounds patriotic citizens—and is a blow in the face to all who abandoned the Republican party in order to establish a purer administration—Of course, you cannot know personally every subordinate candidate or appointee. But, in a case so flagrant as this, you cannot escape knowledge and responsibility, and I earnestly hope, for the cause which we both serve, that it will seem to you a duty to interfere in this matter before it is too late."

On September 16th the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Reform Association voted to send a representative to point out to the President wherein the civil service laws had been violated by Hedden, and invited Edward M. Shepard, then President of the Young Men's Democratic Club of Brooklyn, to act in this capacity; but Mr. Shepard declined, preferring to send a personal appeal to the President, in which he wrote:

"I do not know Mr. Sterling personally; but he is certainly widely supposed to be a corrupt man. He is



not now a weigher—and his experience as a weigher, if he ever had it, was very long ago and was not of an importance to fit him to be the executive head of three hundred employees. He is a liquor-dealer, whose associates are reputed to be of a very rough character. To place to a considerable degree, in his charge, the enormous commercial interests of the warehousemen along the Brooklyn water front and their customers would be an official act, if adopted by the Administration, which would be a lasting and most serious burden upon its friends.”

There followed many pages in justification of his complaint, and the letter ended with the declaration that the President should “without delay and in the most emphatic way revoke Mr. Sterling’s appointment, and restore Captain Bacon, unless there be proven charges against him.”

Collector Hedden, on the other hand, stoutly defended the change, on the ground that neither the letter nor the spirit of the civil service regulations had been violated, that Bacon had been a highly unsatisfactory official, lending his office to political exploitation, and that Sterling was “a man of integrity, and particularly skilled in the work of the office to which he was appointed.”

Under such conditions, it was necessary for the President to discover the truth for himself before expressing an opinion. He therefore requested his brother-in-law, E. B. Yeomans, to visit the district in question and to report upon the facts, while in order to protect the service he directed that Sterling’s appointment be revoked until a final decision could be properly rendered. Yeomans’s report, which covered seventeen sheets of foolscap, was distinctly favorable to Sterling, and tended to justify his appointment to succeed Bacon, although it declared that Sterling kept a liquor saloon.

The President next wrote the following letter:



Executive Mansion, Washington.

*Sept. 29, 1885.*

EDWARD M. SHEPARD, ESQ.,

Dear Sir:

I was glad you wrote to me regarding the Bacon-Sterling affair. Since the receipt of your letter I have caused the suspension of Sterling pending an examination. I cannot afford to be unjust even towards a man so promptly and vigorously assailed. In such cases as this we are all apt to go a little fast. I want you now in cooler moments to help me investigate this affair—and especially the character of Sterling. The rest I can attend to.

I have received letters from very excellent sources representing that Sterling is and always has been a good son to a widowed mother and exemplary as a husband and father, and much more very much to his credit.

I wish you would take a little pains to enquire concerning him and his associates and all that will aid me in making up a judgment. and write to me the result of your investigation.

Mr. James How of the Union White Lead Manufacturing Company knows him well, and he had the endorsement of Arbuckle Bros. and other prominent business houses before he was appointed. Vicar General Keegan knows him well, and I think can say something of his life and habits.

The people I have mentioned are no doubt ready to speak well of him. It is in your power to give me the names and opinions of others perhaps who speak ill of him.

You can readily see that I am not in position to act now on general denunciation.

Yours sincerely,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Mr. Shepard's report is a frank acknowledgment of the fact that his first impressions had been wrong. On September 19th he had insisted that Sterling was manifestly unfit, and that Captain Bacon should be instantly restored to office, unless facts "justifying his removal" are known to the Administration. By October 12th careful investigation had convinced him that Sterling was "a man of considerable native vigor and brightness, having some practical knowledge of weighing and a fair knowledge of figures, and perfectly competent to direct gangs of men," and that "although personally an upright and intelligent man, Captain Bacon has had no great success, either in vigorously directing his subordinates, or in preventing in years past occasion for grave objections to their partisan employment in the politics of Brooklyn."

But President Cleveland had not waited for Mr. Shepard's report. Although upon the basis of the evidence already before him it was clear that nothing had been proved against Sterling, sufficient to warrant his rejection upon personal grounds, the arguments of the civil service reformers had convinced him that his retention would injure the reform movement. He therefore consulted with the Commissioners, and a re-examination of their decision in regard to the status of weighers under the law resulted in an agreement that their prior decision was wrong and that weighers should be examined and passed before appointment. The examination was held, and Sterling was twenty-second out of forty-five candidates. The first man on the list, John W. O'Brien, was therefore made weigher. The Democrats of the Second Ward passed resolutions denouncing this "mean and cowardly treatment of Mr. Sterling" and sent them to "the Mugwump President, the vacillating Secretary



of the Treasury, and the weak-minded Collector, Heden." And so the affair passed into history.

In view of the bitterness which the Bacon-Sterling case had engendered, and of the approaching New York Democratic Convention which was to nominate a Governor, cautious politicians felt that it would be wise for the President to "soft-pedal" his reform views. Clearly, his party in New York was not with him upon this subject. Powerful organizations of New York Democrats had frankly declared bitter hostility to the principles and practices of civil service reform, and influential Democratic newspapers had urged that the convention either condemn the movement openly, or pass it over with a silence which would be interpreted as dissent. Most of the New York Democratic leaders who had made any comment had either condemned the law, which they contemptuously called the "Snivil Service Reform Act," or had construed it in a manner calculated to make it no longer the foe of the spoils system. The gifted Tammany orator, Bourke Cockran, had painted for the benefit of the faithful a heartbreaking picture of the inevitable wreck of democratic equality, should America ever allow to prevail that "pernicious system . . . that erects and creates irresponsible boards or commissions to control or limit the powers conferred by the Constitution on the elect of the people." And the faithful had shouted a glad Amen! They were weary of Cleveland and reform.

At this point Mr. Cleveland chose to imitate his beloved friend, the salmon, which rejoices to swim against the fiercest current. On July 27, 1885, Commissioner Eaton had offered his resignation, and the President, in the face of predictions of calamity, deliberately selected the critical moment in the meeting of the New York Democratic Convention to make public his own letter,



dated September 11, 1885, accepting the resignation, and reaffirming his determination to press forward the civil service reform movement.

Coming as it did between the nominations of the two parties in New York, and accompanied as it was by the suspension of Sterling, this letter attracted more attention than either of the platforms adopted at Saratoga, but it did not bring victory to the reform element in New York. David B. Hill, backed by Tammany Hall, the old canal ring, and other highly un-reform-like elements, was master of the convention. His hungry eyes were on the White House, and the hungry eyes of the disappointed spoilsmen of New York were on David B. Hill, who had shown that he understood how to give them "their meat in due season." His nomination caused many of the Independents who had supported Cleveland in 1884 to gravitate toward the Republican candidate, Davenport, who, as Carl Schurz expressed it, "represents the best tendencies, not only in his own, but in both political parties, and Mr. Hill the worst."

These defections, together with the desertion of many Democrats, due in part to Hill's nomination and in part to the belief that President Cleveland was opposed to his election, greatly disturbed the New York Democratic leaders. On October 5, 1885, Alton B. Parker, Chairman of the Executive Committee, therefore, made an appeal to the President, declaring that the only thing necessary to insure the election of Hill and his fellow New York Democrats was a word from Mr. Cleveland in their favor. This he promptly received; for, as a party man, Mr. Cleveland felt that he must support the party ticket; and he contributed a thousand dollars toward the campaign fund, although conscious that many of Hill's friends were daily denouncing and misrepresenting him.

"If I thought," he wrote to Parker when making his contribution, "that you needed any advice I should strongly urge upon you to enjoin upon any person pretending to desire the success of the ticket, and at the same time howling about the Administration and claiming that it should '*speak out*,' that campaigns are successfully fought by pushing the merits of candidates and principles, and not by a foolish attempt to discredit an Administration which is doing all that is possible to assist the canvass. I think the greatest enemy to the success of your ticket to-day is the man and the paper which is constantly yelling to the Administration to come to its rescue. And if you know of anybody that has any influence with the N. Y. *World* you should, I think, ask that the manifestation of its unfriendliness to the Administration be restrained till after election. As for the professed friends of the ticket who are constantly drumming at the Administration, their motives and purposes ought not to be misunderstood and they should not be permitted to conceal their misdeeds by the cry of 'stop thief.' You see I do not claim any decent treatment for myself, though I am not able to see where I have forfeited it."

Hill won a sweeping victory, his plurality over his Republican opponent being more than ten times as large as that of Cleveland over Blaine in 1884, and his total vote falling only sixty-one thousand below the New York Democratic presidential vote in that year. It was a victory most pleasing to the Cleveland partisans who were not in a position to read its true meaning; but to the President himself, gifted with the seeing eye, it was far from being a victory in praise of Grover Cleveland, friend of civil service reform.

Never given to self-adulation or smug complacency, he was conscious then, as he was made more conscious



later, that, despite his best efforts to lead his party in the right direction, a great and dangerous political machine composed of Federal office holders was slowly fastening its grip upon the party, with the purpose of perpetuating Democratic control, and that David B. Hill was increasingly regarded as a coming Moses, fit to lead them out of the wilderness of non-partisan government and exasperating reform. The progress of the new year, 1886, saw this tendency steadily increasing; and Hill's references in his inaugural address to New York Governors who had become national leaders, indicated the workings of his ambition.

In view of this fact, and in view of the lessons of his Eaton letter, Mr. Cleveland might have been pardoned, had he maintained a discreet silence regarding the growing evil of official interference in partisan politics. Indeed, he might have escaped the censure of others had he set his mind toward the building of a personal machine of office holders. Instead, however, he astonished the machine men, delighted the reformers, and threw consternation into the ranks of his closest partisan advisers by issuing the following drastic executive order:

Executive Mansion, Washington,

*July 14, 1886.*

I deem this a proper time to especially warn all subordinates in the several departments and all office-holders under the General Government against the use of their official positions in attempts to control political movements in their localities.

Office-holders are the agents of the people—not their masters. Not only is their time and labor due to the Government, but they should scrupulously avoid in their



political action, as well as in the discharge of their official duty, offending by a display of obtrusive partisanship their neighbors who have relations with them as public officials.

They should also constantly remember that their party friends from whom they have received preferment, have not invested them with the power of arbitrarily managing their political affairs. They have no right as office-holders to dictate the political action of their party associates or to throttle freedom of action within party lines by methods and practices which pervert every useful and justifiable purpose of party organization.

The influence of Federal office-holders should not be felt in the manipulation of political primary meetings and nominating conventions. The use by these officials of their positions to compass their selection as delegates to political conventions is indecent and unfair, and proper regard for the proprieties and requirements of official place will also prevent their assuming the active conduct of political campaigns.

Individual interest and activity in political affairs are by no means condemned. Office-holders are neither disfranchised nor forbidden the exercise of political privileges, but their privileges are not enlarged, nor is their duty to party increased to pernicious activity by office-holding.

A just discrimination in this regard between the things a citizen may properly do and the purposes for which a public office should not be used is easy, in the light of a correct appreciation of the relation between the people and those intrusted with official place, and a consideration of the necessity, under our form of government, of political action free from official coercion. You are

requested to communicate the substance of these views to those for whose guidance they are intended.

GROVER CLEVELAND.

With the autumn campaign came the inevitable test case, and for once the cautious President was found incautious, the careful investigator of facts spoke without a knowledge of the facts, thus inviting ridicule and insult which his many enemies gave freely, gladly, exultantly. Two Federal District Attorneys, Benton of Missouri, a Democrat, and Stone of Pennsylvania, a Republican, had made campaign speeches and President Cleveland, without sufficient inquiry into the facts, suspended both. At once Benton, the Democrat, pleaded for restoration on the ground that his speeches had in no way interfered with his official duties. Convinced upon this point, Mr. Cleveland ordered that Benton be restored to his post. At the announcement of this decision, the other suspended District Attorney, Stone, appealed for restoration on the ground that his suspension had been for the same reasons as that of Benton. "I made but two speeches prior to the receipt of the order of suspension," he said, "nor . . . did I in any particular neglect the duties of my office."

After carefully weighing Stone's plea, President Cleveland drafted a refusal in these words:

Executive Mansion,

*Nov. 23, 1886.*

HON. A. H. GARLAND, Attorney General.

Dear Sir:

I have read the letter of the 18th inst. written to you by William A. Stone, lately suspended from office as District Attorney for the western district of Pennsylvania,



and the subject matter to which it refers has received my careful consideration. I shall not impute to the writer any mischievous motive in his plainly erroneous assumption that his case and that of M. E. Benton, recently suspended and reinstated, rest upon the same state of facts, but prefer to regard his letter as containing the best statement possible upon the question of his reinstatement.

You remember, of course, that soon after the present administration was installed, and, I think, nearly a year and a half ago, I considered with you certain charges which had been preferred against Mr. Stone as a federal official. You remember, too, that the action we then contemplated was withheld by reason of the excuses and explanations of his friends. These excuses and explanations induced me to believe that Mr. Stone's retention would insure a faithful performance of official duty; and that whatever offensive partisanship he had deemed justifiable in other circumstances, he would, during his continuance in office at his request under an administration opposed to him in political creed and policy, content himself with a quiet and unobtrusive enjoyment of his political privileges. . . .

Mr. Stone, when permitted to remain in office, became a part of the business organization of the present administration, bound by every obligation of honor to assist, within his sphere, in its successful operation. This obligation involved not only the proper performance of official duty, but a certain good faith and fidelity which, while not exacting the least sacrifice of political principle, forbade active participation in purely partisan demonstrations of a pronounced type, undertaken for the purpose of advancing partisan interests, and conducted upon the avowed theory that the administration of the government was not entitled to the confidence and respect of the



people. There is no dispute whatever concerning the fact that Mr. Stone did join others who were campaigning the State of Pennsylvania in opposition to the administration. It appears, too, that he was active and prominent with noisy enthusiasm in attendance upon at least two large public meetings; that the speeches at such meetings were largely devoted to abuse and misrepresentation of the administration; that he approved all this and actually addressed the meetings himself in somewhat the same strain; that he attended such meetings away from his home for the purpose of making such addresses, and that he was advertised as one of the speakers at each of the said meetings.

I shall accept as true the statement of Mr. Stone that the time spent by him in thus demonstrating his willingness to hold a profitable office at the hands of the administration which he endeavored to discredit with the people, and which had kindly overlooked his previous offenses, did not result in the neglect of ordinary official duty. But his conduct has brought to light such an unfriendliness toward the administration which he pretends to serve and of which he is nominally a part, and such a subsequent lack of loyal interest in its success, that the safest and surest guaranty of his faithful service is, in my opinion, entirely wanting. . . . Mr. Stone and others of like disposition are not to suppose that party lines are so far obliterated that the administration of the government is to be trusted in places high or low to those who aggressively and constantly endeavor, unfairly to destroy the confidence of the people in the party responsible for such administration. . . . Upon a full consideration of all I have before me, I am constrained to decline the application of Mr. Stone for his reinstatement.

I inclose his letter with this, and desire you to acquaint him with my decision.

Yours truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Upon the publication of this letter, the anti-Cleveland press opened their largest vials of wrath, declaring the discrimination against Mr. Stone to be "a presidential sop to the Bourbon Cerberus of the spoils system." This criticism was unfair, as no rules have ever been operative in this or any other country whereby a subordinate is protected in office while openly seeking to deprive his superior of public confidence. President Cleveland had generously continued Stone in office, despite the fact that he had been an active anti-Cleveland campaigner in 1884; but the warning of July 14, 1886, had been specific and should have been sufficient. Stone had flagrantly disregarded it, and his removal was, therefore, entirely just.

The weakness of the President's position lay in the fact that, in his effort to differentiate the two cases, he had incautiously assumed that Benton, being a Democrat, had spoken in defense of the Administration. "I did not intend," he wrote in ordering Benton's restoration, "to condemn the making of a political speech by a Federal official . . . if the speech itself was decent and fair." When the full body of evidence became available, however, it appeared that Benton had attacked President Cleveland's dearest policies quite as violently as any Republican could have done. "I heard Colonel M. E. Benton's speech, October 11th," wrote the editor of the *North Missourian*, on November 27th." . . . Among other things Colonel Benton said: "Democracy is the



poor and ignorant party of this country—the great barefooted, unwashed, dirty-socked party. . . . I don't agree with Mr. Cleveland in everything. I don't believe in his Civil Service humbuggery. . . . I don't agree with Mr. Cleveland on the silver question. He was raised east of the Alleghany Mountains, and he gets his ideas from that region. He never has been west of Buffalo, and has not any more idea of the great west . . . than the mere schoolboy who learns it from studying geography. He gets his ideas on finance from the gold bugs of Wall Street, who once demonetized silver and had it—the dollar—stricken from the coinage act clandestinely. . . . He learns his financial theories from Wall Street, the leeches that suck the blood of the honest yeomanry of the west, like vampires.” In view of such facts it is clear that Mr. Cleveland's mistake was not in refusing to restore Stone, but in restoring Benton without first making certain that he had been “decent and fair.”

That this was a mistake is beyond question, and it shook the ranks of Mr. Cleveland's Mugwump followers. At the suggestion of a number of Cleveland Independent leaders, Carl Schurz wrote to the President, with brutal frankness: “Until recently . . . the worst things tied to your charge were construed as mere errors of judgment, and occasionally a certain stubbornness of temper in sticking to an error once committed. But . . . this confiding belief has been seriously shaken by your action in . . . the Benton-Stone case. This was not a mere mistake as to the character or qualifications of a person, or an error owing to misinformation. This was a retreat from a position of principle—a backdown apparently for partisan reasons or under partisan dictation. The letters with which that retreat was sought to be covered made the matter only worse, and the subsequent revelation of the



fact that the Democrat, Benton, had really attacked your administration while the Republican, Stone, had cautiously abstained from doing so, has poured over all professions of principle or impartiality in the proceeding a flood of ridicule which is even more hateful than severe, serious criticism. . . . This one step has greatly diminished the number of those who were confident that, whatever you did, if not always well done, was at least always well meant. . . . It seems no exaggeration to say that your action in the Benton-Stone case is the worst blow the Democratic party has suffered since 1884. It has been received with jubilant shouts by your worst enemies, such as the *New York Sun*, who wish not only to defeat but to disgrace you."

But the tasks of a President are many, and mistakes are inevitable, while it is also inevitable that even friends will at times impute motives which the facts do not justify. The interpretation of the Independents was unfair to the President, who was honestly striving to live up to his pledge, and, being only human, was failing, at times.

Perhaps an even sounder point of criticism was the fact that, despite Mr. Cleveland's wise declaration in the order of July 14, 1886, that "the influences of Federal office holders should not be felt in the manipulation of political primary meetings and nominating conventions," the nominating conventions and primaries of 1886 had witnessed again the effects of that type of pernicious partisanship, far more dangerous to free government than is mere participation in open campaigning, and there had been no dismissals upon that charge. It was indeed true, as his enemies vociferously asserted, that the punishment he had imposed had been for the lesser offense; for if the people can be left free to make their own nominations, in

unbossed, unpacked conventions, the master hand of officialdom being kept from interfering, they will be little injured by listening to campaign speeches by officials.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE EXECUTIVE

*"It is not the mere slothful acceptance of righteous political ideas, but the call to action for their enforcement and application, that tests the endurance and moral courage of men."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

FROM the beginning of the history of popular government to the present day there has gone on a ceaseless conflict between the Executive and those whose "advice and consent" was essential to effective administration. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the history of the phrase "advice and consent" is the history of the gradual evolution of the British Parliament from the Anglo-Saxon Witenagemot, or Assembly of Wise Men, and the Norman Great Council of the Realm. Go back into English history as far as constitutional documents permit, and always, in every period, written in Latin, in French, or in English, appear the words "with the advice and consent."

In 759 King Sigiraed gave lands to Bishop Eardwulf "with the advice and consent of my principal men." In 774 Alcred, King of Northumbria, "by the advice and consent of all his people . . . exchanged the majesty of empire for exile," according to a contemporary chronicle. Henry II issued the Forest Assize of 1184 "by the advice and consent of the archbishops, bishops, barons, earles, and nobles of England." The Wicked King John acknowledged that his subjects were to be taxed "by the common advice and assent of our Council." Henry III as-



cended the throne "by the common advice and consent of the said king and the magnates," and Bracton, the prince of mediæval lawyers, declares: "The laws of England cannot be changed or destroyed without the common advice and consent of all those by whose advice and consent they were promulgated." During all those centuries the people through their representatives, a term of increasing definiteness of meaning, struggled with the crown, first to win power, and later to defend and enlarge it. By "the glorious revolution of 1688" they became supreme, and at once the Crown devised a system of patronage by which the executive power could control, by indirection, a legislature no longer amenable to the direct control of earlier days.

Meanwhile the English colonies in America had naturally fallen into the ancient formula, performing their simple acts of government "by and with the advice and consent" of whatever their legislative branch happened to be called. The old statute book of North Carolina opened with the phrase: "Be it enacted by his Excellency Gabriel Johnston, Esq., Governor, by and with the advice and consent of his Majesty's Council and General Assembly." And New York, Delaware, Maryland, South Carolina, and Georgia prefaced their statutes by that selfsame phrase.

After the Revolution, when the weak articles of confederation were leading the new nation toward anarchy, the Constitutional Convention of 1787 assembled at Philadelphia to prepare for a more perfect union. Every lawyer there had thumbed the English statute books, reading each time the ancient phrase, "by and with the advice and consent." And many of the delegates were accustomed to its use in their state constitutions. It was natural, therefore, that the convention, when seeking a

phrase to describe the proposed action of the Senate to which was to be given the right of passing upon executive appointments, should have provided that "he (the President) shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers, and consuls, etc." Thus the power of appointment was definitely assigned to what at first sight appears a combination—the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate sitting in executive session. The word "advice," however, soon lost its independent meaning and became "merged in 'consent,'" as Wharton informs us, and thus consent alone was left to the Senate, which could check the President's power of appointment, but could not properly claim to share it.

The question of whether removals from office were to be made by the President alone, or by the President with the consent of the Senate was unfortunately left undetermined. In the beginning it was generally recognized that the power of removal rested with the President, independently, the first Congress having affirmed this principle after a conflict which Senator Evarts later characterized as "the most important and best considered debate in the history of Congress." But little importance attached to the matter, however, during our first forty years under the Constitution, as there were, during that period, less than a hundred removals. Washington, although frankly declaring that he would never, knowingly, appoint a man opposed to the policies of his administration, would have scorned the suggestion that he should remove an officer so opposed, in order to give his post to one who professed agreement. John Adams was almost equally generous, although the bitterness of recently developed party politics made his temptations far greater. It is true that when Jefferson became President, after what



he termed "the Revolution of 1800," and found the offices packed with Federalists, he exclaimed: "If a due participation of office is a matter of right, how are vacancies to be obtained? Those by death are few, by resignation none. Can any other mode than that of removal be proposed?" But despite the apparent menace of the words, he contented himself with displacing thirty-nine officials, and his three immediate successors each fell short of this record.

When Andrew Jackson and his new-style democracy swept into power, however, this condition was suddenly and ruthlessly altered. Feeling the need of places for his followers, Jackson suggested that all civil service posts be put under the four years' law, a change which would have produced executive pandemonium every four years. And when the Senate refused to countenance this plan, he made places by wholesale removals, two thousand official heads falling within the first year. At once the Senate, realizing the political power represented by the control of removals upon such a scale, showed a disposition to share it with him; but they found Jackson like a lion in the path, and promptly desisted.

Against the weaker Presidents who followed Jackson, senatorial encroachment was comparatively easy. Each Senator had only to let his fellow Senators know that he would help confirm appointees from their states in return for reciprocal favors, and lo! in their joint control lay the patronage of the nation. It mattered not that both removals and nominations must come from the President. Confirmations must come from the Senate, and the President soon found himself obliged to make his nominations fit the cogs of senatorial local machines, or the executive national car would not move. "The courtesy of the Senate," as its inventors euphemistically termed this sim-



ple scheme of silence and division, enabled the Senate to extend its constitutional right of confirmation so as to make it cover also removals from office. By an ingenious expansion they argued that before they could know whether Mr. Y. was worthy of being confirmed for a Federal office, they must be shown that Mr. Y.'s predecessor had been properly removed from that office.

The climax of this interesting development of senatorial encroachment upon powers long admitted to be purely executive, came in 1867. By one audacious enactment, the Tenure of Office Act, the Senate grasped complete control of both appointments and removals, and reduced the executive branch of the Government to the humiliating position of a mere executive agency, bound to ask leave of the Senate when called upon to deal with its own subordinates. This law limited the executive power of removal to suspension which, even during congressional recess, could be only for "misconduct . . . or crime," which misconduct or crime must be reported to the Senate with the evidence and reasons for the President's action, within twenty days after the reconvening of that body. If the Senate refused to approve the action of the President, the suspended official was at liberty forthwith to return to his post. Thus, by action of a co-ordinate branch of the government, the great presidential office, which in Jackson's time had invented the spoils system, was deprived of its power of appointment, as well as its power of removal. The United States Senate had fulfilled to the letter the prediction which James Wilson had made in the Convention of 1787: "The President will not be the man of the people, but the minion of the Senate."

The use made of this inflated senatorial power of patronage was demoralizing in the extreme. United

States Senators became autocrats in state politics; "spoiling" their way to re-election by the not too subtle power of the plum. And before the days of reconstruction were ended, indignant public opinion and more indignant executive protest compelled a revision of the Tenure of Office Act which, by the law of April 5, 1869, was shorn of its most obnoxious features. The sections of the act regulating suspensions were entirely repealed, and provisions were substituted which, instead of limiting the causes of suspension to misconduct, and crime, expressly permitted such suspension by the President "in his discretion," and abandoned the requirement that he report to the Senate "the evidence and reasons" for his action.

The amendment, however, failed to restore to the Executive the full freedom of removal which he had enjoyed in early days, and as such was far from satisfactory to succeeding Presidents. Under it the President, while free to make removals, not mere suspensions, was required, "within thirty days after the commencement of each session, . . . to nominate persons to fill all vacancies." If the Senate rejected a nomination, the President was expected to make another, and to proceed thus until an agreement was reached. But the officer dismissed was not free to resume his office, however long the disagreement between President and Senate.

Against these remaining limitations President Grant vigorously protested, declaring in his first annual message that their provisions were "inconsistent with the faithful and efficient administration of the Government" and should be totally repealed. President Hayes made a similar demand; and Garfield, during his brief period as head of the nation, bitterly denounced "the usurpation by the Senate of a large share of appointing power," declaring: "The President can remove no officer without



the consent of the Senate . . . unless the successor is agreeable to the Senator in the state where the appointee resides—a power most corrupting and dangerous.” It was, furthermore, the frank opinion of most of the lawyers, both in and out of the Senate, that the Tenure of Office Act, even in its altered form, was unconstitutional. But the question was not passed upon by the courts and although the House of Representatives upon three occasions declared for the repeal of the laws, the Senate would not concur. And so until the days of President Cleveland successive Presidents vainly fretted because of what they considered legislative encroachments, desirous of freeing themselves from the remains of the Tenure of Office Act, but unable to do so.

In all the realm of political theory, in which indeed he wandered but little, there is no doctrine which Mr. Cleveland revered more highly than that of the separation of powers. That this was not due to any personal craving for power is shown by the fact that he was always ready, in the interest of civil service reform, to part with the control of patronage, the very essence of political influence. It was due rather to his belief that in the definite division of powers lay the hope of efficient government.

At the very beginning of his administration he received from political supporters definite and frequent warnings of the Senate’s intention to encroach in the matter of removals. With the impending conflict in mind, Bayard wrote: “I do not see how the President can better serve the Country than by keeping the lines of his official duties and powers clearly defined, neither stepping beyond them, nor allowing intrusion by anyone.” And again: “If the discretion of Congress is to be substituted for that of the Executive the anomaly will appear of de-



prising the only officer having the duty and power and opportunity of supervision . . . of all control."

These warnings confirmed Mr. Cleveland's own fears, and in his opening message to the Forty-ninth Congress he sounded a note which was dangerously like a warning to the Senate. "It is well," he said, "for us to bear in mind that our usefulness to the people's interests will be promoted by a constant appreciation of the scope and character of our respective bodies as they relate to Federal legislation. . . . Contemplation of the grave and responsible functions assigned to the respective branches of the Government under the Constitution will disclose the partitions of power between our respective departments and their necessary independence, and also the need for the exercise of all the power entrusted to each in that spirit of comity and co-operation which is essential to the proper fulfilment of the patriotic obligations which rest upon us as faithful servants of the people."

This statement set forth in unmistakable terms the theory by which he proposed to conduct his administration; and those who knew him realized that the co-ordinate branch was expected to order its affairs in accordance. He regarded it not as his own political theory, but as the theory upon which the people had constructed their state. He had studied the law, and was formally expounding it to his fellow workers, in order that needless friction might be avoided. Furthermore, it was his mature conviction that removals from office were not intended by the Constitution to be in any way subject to the will of the Senate, and he was determined to guard the prerogatives of his department, cost what it might, offend whom it might. A conflict with the Senate was thus inevitable.

Within the legal limit of a month after the assembling of his first Congress, President Cleveland sent to the

Senate the names of the persons whom he had selected to take the places of officials suspended during vacation. There were six hundred and forty-three in all, and at once members of Senate committees prepared to insist that the President give his reasons for the removal of the officers whose places he was thus proposing to fill. That concession made, the Senate would again be in the saddle. They first asked the heads of executive departments for reasons for the removals. At the direction of the President, this request was refused on the ground that "the public interest would not be thereby promoted" or that "the reasons related to a purely executive act." Requests of this character at last became so numerous that a set form of reply was prescribed by the President.

This mild method of encroachment having failed, the Senators prepared to turn the screw which had so often brought from Executives a reluctant submission. "If we can't get the information we want," declared one prominent Republican Senator, . . . "we can let some of the appointees broil a while in fear that they will get no salaries." This suggestion the Senate promptly adopted. They left the President's nominations to slumber in the senatorial committees to which they had been referred and, diplomatically but definitely, intimated that they would at once confirm every nomination if he would publicly declare that he had made removals and appointments for political reasons. Their object was, of course, to induce him to repudiate his reform pledges, and by thus discrediting the party to which he belonged, increase the strength of the opposing party which controlled the Senate. Equally, of course, the plan was a failure. The President would not barter.

To argue as did the New York *Tribune* that the Senate was acting in the interest of publicity for the facts



concerning removals was manifestly to flatter that body. Their aim was not publicity, but control of removals. Such matters as confirmations they themselves considered far from openly. At any moment, upon demand of two Senators, the galleries would be cleared, the doors locked, and the publicity-loving Senate would settle down to a quiet game of office trading.

Convinced at last that neither by appeals to heads of departments nor by holding up appointments could they bring the President to an acknowledgment of their right to control removals, the senatorial majority tried another tack. On July 17, 1885, President Cleveland had removed George M. Duskin from his post as Federal Attorney for the southern district of Alabama, and had appointed John D. Burnett to the place thus vacated. In ignorance of the fact that Duskin's term had expired on December 20, 1885, and that for that reason his was a poor test case, Senator Edmunds, Chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, on December 26th requested the Attorney General of the United States to submit to it all information and papers relating to the nomination of Burnett, and to the removal of Duskin.

On January 11, 1886, the Attorney General sent the former documents, but declared that he had received no direction from the President which would justify him in sending those relating to the suspension of Duskin. Within a few hours the Senate Judiciary Committee took up a discussion of the question, and that evening Senator Vest wrote to the President:

"I think you should be apprized of what occurred this morning. . . . A letter from the Attorney General was read. . . . I then inquired of Mr. Edmunds, the Chairman, whether the Committee proposed to obtain the reasons of the President for removals and suspen-



sions. That for myself I denied any such right in the Committee—that we had the right to examine the qualifications of persons nominated, but not the President's reasons for suspension.

“Mr. Edmunds replied that he did not claim the right to know the President's reasons for suspension, but that committees of Congress had never been refused such courtesy by the President, etc. No one of the Republican senators present dissented from this position. Mr. Edmunds clearly conceded the point, that the President had the exclusive Constitutional power to make removals and suspensions, for reasons satisfactory to him, without consulting the Senate.”

Despite this opinion, the Republican majority organized a movement to force the President to yield to the demand of the Senate and contrived to make it appear that Mr. Cleveland refused the information required because he dared not allow his reasons to be known. “His refusal,” declared one of the leaders of the movement . . . “is enough to show that he has departed from his idea (of reform) and is now acting simply on the old-fashioned spoils system.”

Mr. Cleveland, while fully conscious of the purpose of the senatorial majority and determined to defend the prerogatives of his office, was equally determined to force his antagonists to become the open aggressors. He therefore allowed the heads of departments to continue unable to grant the requests of the Senate and waited for requests to become demands. At that point actual strife between the Senate and the President would begin, and a far-sighted press predicted that the end of that strife would be the repeal of what remained of the Tenure of Office Act.

On January 25, 1886, that point was reached. On that

day, in the face of the best legal opinion, the Senate definitely directed the Attorney General "to transmit . . . copies of all documents . . . filed in the Department of Justice since the 1st day of January, A. D. 1885, in relation to the conduct of the office of District Attorney of the United States for the Southern District of Alabama."

Affairs being thus brought to a head, the President took up with his advisers the question as to the precise form of refusal which the Attorney General should send to this demand. Mr. Cleveland's papers contain a number of drafts, the most interesting of which is the following, written wholly in his "copper-plate."

"I have to reply that all documents and papers relating to the appointment of a District Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama have already been transmitted to the Judiciary Committee of the Senate. I am directed by the President to reply to that part of the resolution of the Senate adopted in Executive session calling on me to transmit all papers and documents touching the conduct of said officer, that it is not deemed consistent with the good of the public service to transmit to the Senate in executive session all the papers and documents without regard to their character which are in the possession of this department in relation to the management and conduct of the office of District Attorney of the Southern District of Alabama."

The reply actually sent by the Attorney General differed considerably from this draft, though its meaning was identical with it: "I am directed by the President to refuse your demand." This was a challenge to battle, and the Senate Committee on the Judiciary promptly laid before the Senate a report censuring the Attorney General—and in effect the President—for his refusal, though a



minority presented a dissenting report agreeing with the position of the Executive.

Up to this time the exchange of communications had been confined to committees of the Senate and heads of departments, neither the Senate itself nor the President being directly involved. But this resolution was a challenge to the President himself upon the issue, whether the Executive is or is not invested with the right to remove officials without interference from the Senate. Upon that question, President Cleveland entertained no doubts. Freely as he recognized the duty of the Executive to avoid encroachments upon legislative power, he was no less clear that he was bound to transmit unimpaired to his successors the prerogatives of the executive office, which he considered "pre-eminently the people's office."

"The only thing that gives me any real anxiety," he told a Boston reporter, on January 28th, "is that the people may get a false idea of my position, and imagine that I have done anything which I have the least ground to cover up. I have nothing to conceal, and am conscious that in exercising the power of suspension I have in every case been governed by a sense of duty and a regard for the good of the public service. Any and every proper inquiry, made in good faith and with a regard to the courtesies that have always prevailed . . . would have been answered. But that is not what is sought." And he added, deliberately, "I shall not submit to improper dictation."

Soon rumors of a coming conflict between President and Senate formed the center of society gossip, newspaper speculation, and cloakroom conversations, throughout Washington, and gradually throughout the country. Letters poured in from every direction, full of advice, full of warning, full of solicitude. James Schouler, the his-



torian, wrote: "The firm stand which it is understood that you intend taking against permitting the Senate to inquire into the reasons for your suspensions, I believe to be just, constitutional, and politic. . . . I do not see how any papers bearing upon such cases could be furnished as a rule, without requiring some further explanation of reasons. And if you were once to put your high prerogatives before the present Senate, in any deprecating tone, they would not show magnanimity in return."

Other and more cautious friends pleaded with him not to become involved in conflict with the Senate, but to no purpose. In vain did Carl Schurz ply him with pages of fatherly advice, urging him to yield. "The Republican Senators," wrote the latter, "are not going to let this matter rest. Some of them are in possession of cases of removal which have an ugly partisan look. You refuse all information about them. They contrive some way of investigating them, and they certainly have the power, and are likely to do that. Some of the cases in question are brought out before the public as removals on mere partisan grounds, in direct violation of your pledges. Suppose this contingency—in what light will it leave you?"

It was characteristic of Mr. Cleveland that he paid very little attention to the question "In what light will it leave you?" His fight was for principle, not for personal prestige. After reading this letter, and many like it, he turned, quite unmoved, to the task of drafting his message of March 1, 1886, which frankly avowed the opinion that in censuring the Attorney General the Senate Committee had in reality censured the President. "These suspensions are my executive acts . . ." he said, "I am wholly responsible." "The letter of the Attorney General . . . was written at my suggestion and by my direc-

tion." "I am not responsible to the Senate, and I am unwilling to submit my actions . . . to them for judgment."

In elaborate detail he argued the question of the independence of the Executive in matters of removals. He drew a clear distinction between documents official in character, and documents purely unofficial and private. The former he declared himself ready and willing to transmit to the Senate on demand; the latter he declined to deliver, regarding them as "having reference to the performance of a duty exclusively mine."

He made it abundantly clear that he disputed, unequivocally, the right of the Senate, by the aid of any document whatever, or in any way "save through the judicial process of trial by impeachment," to revise the acts of the Executive in the suspension of Federal officials. Vigorously he protested against the Senate's attempt to revive, after "nearly twenty years of almost innocuous desuetude," the laws which had hampered Andrew Johnson. Baldly he declared the opinion that both the repealed and the unrepealed parts of the Tenure of Office Act were unconstitutional, and scornfully asked: "Why should the provisions of the repealed law . . . be now in effect applied to the present Executive, instead of the law afterwards passed and unrepealed, which distinctly permits suspensions by the President 'in his discretion'?"

He declared that the scores of demands which had been presented to the departments "have had but one complexion. They assume the right of the Senate to sit in judgment upon the exercise of my exclusive discretion and executive function, for which I am solely responsible to the people. . . . My oath to support and defend the Constitution, my duty to the people who have chosen me to execute the powers of their great office and not to re-



linquish them, and my duty to the Chief Magistracy which I must preserve unimpaired in all its dignity and vigor compel me to refuse compliance. . . .”

His remark about Andrew Johnson and impeachment was no chance reference. He knew the temper of the Republican majority of 1886 better perhaps than Johnson had known that of the Republican majority of 1868, and yet he dared thus to flaunt the idea of impeachment in the very face of his enemies.

This message reiterates President Cleveland's fighting faith in the theory of the separation of powers, and his conception of the scope of those belonging to the office of President, a conception which in later years he thus compressed into a paragraph: “The members of the Convention (which formed the Constitution) were not willing . . . that the executive power which they had vested in the President should be cramped and embarrassed by any implication that a specific statement of certain granted powers and duties excluded all” others. “Therefore . . . the Constitution supplements a recital of the specific powers and duties of the President with this impressive and conclusive additional requirement: ‘He shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.’ This I conceive to be equivalent to a grant of all the power necessary to the performance of his duty in the faithful execution of the laws.”

This view of the President's powers is closely akin to that later formulated by President Roosevelt in the words: “My belief was that it was not only his right but his duty to do anything that the need of the nation demanded unless such action was forbidden by the Constitution or by the laws. . . . I did not usurp power, but I did greatly broaden the use of Executive power. In other words, I acted for the public welfare, I acted for the common



well-being of all our people, whenever and in whatever manner was necessary, unless prevented by direct Constitutional or legislative prohibition."

There is, however, one striking difference between the theories of these two Presidents: Mr. Cleveland felt that the Executive must carefully avoid encroachments upon the legislative power; while Mr. Roosevelt professed no such view. "In theory," the latter wrote in his autobiography, "the Executive has nothing to do with legislation. In practice, as things are, the Executive is or ought to be peculiarly representative of the people as a whole. As often as not the action of the Executive offers the only means by which the people can get the legislation they demand and ought to have. Therefore a good Executive . . . must take a very active interest in getting the right kind of legislation, in addition to performing his executive duties." In other words, Mr. Cleveland's interpretation was that the President is free to perform in the executive field functions of any character not specifically forbidden; Mr. Roosevelt's interpretation was that he is thus free in both executive and legislative fields.

For two weeks the Senate debated Mr. Cleveland's message of March 1, 1886, the majority leaders fiercely attacking, and a minority vigorously defending. Senator Edmunds, in urging that the message be referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, used the suggestive words: "It very vividly brought to my mind the communication of King Charles I to Parliament, telling them what, in conducting their affairs, they ought to do and ought not to do." When at last the vote was taken, by a majority of thirty-two to twenty-five, the Attorney General, and by implication the President, was formally censured for withholding the documents which the Senate had de-

manded, as being an act "subversive of the fundamental principles of the Government." At this critical moment, the President calmly pointed out that as Duskin's term had expired before the controversy opened, the only question requiring action by the Senate was whether Burnett should be confirmed as his successor. As there was no special reason for displacing Burnett, who had now been several months in office, the confirmation was made and the immediate conflict was over.

But in the sequel lies the chief result of the President's determined fight. Senator Hoar, one of the leaders of the anti-Cleveland forces in this conflict, himself "took the first opportunity to introduce a bill repealing the provisions of the statute relating to the tenure of office . . ." as his autobiography declares, "so that we might go back again to the law which had been in force from the foundation of the Government." The bill was introduced in December, 1886, and on the third of the following March received the ready approval of the President. Looking back, in reminiscent mood, in 1904, Senator Hoar wrote: "I do not think a man can be found in the Senate now who would wish to go back to the law."

Thus ended, in a manner wholly satisfactory to Mr. Cleveland, the most important and far-reaching of the many conflicts of his first administration. The time-honored boundaries of executive power were restored, and Presidents were again free to deal with their subordinates without senatorial suspension or control. Once more the mountain had labored; but it had this time produced something more than the traditional mouse. It has been said with truth that in the field of political theory Grover Cleveland left no monuments; but in his reassertion of the independence of the Executive he left a restoration more valuable than many a new creation.



Long before his fight for the independence of the Executive was over, Mr. Cleveland had willfully and deliberately compromised it for all future time by persuading the beautiful Frances Folsom, daughter of his former law partner, Oscar Folsom, to fix the second day of June as her wedding day. Soon after her graduation from Wells College, in June, 1885, Miss Folsom and her mother had sailed for Europe, not to study the social machinery of court life, as the newspapers later informed an interested public, but to travel and study. Although the engagement had taken place before the boat sailed, the secret had been jealously guarded and had not been suspected by the public. A *bon voyage* telegram from the President, which the operator generously sent broadcast over the country, had for the time being set the tongues of gossip wagging, but they wagged more slowly as the months passed without bringing further news. Indeed, they had almost ceased altogether when there came a letter from the bride-elect to a friend announcing in confidence her engagement. The injunction to secrecy was, however, not in the beginning, but in a later paragraph, and the recipient read the letter aloud at the breakfast table, only stopping when she reached the command for silence.

A few days later, the President was driving with an old friend and her daughter when the latter called his attention to a newspaper clipping which intimated that the President was going to marry Mrs. Folsom. To which the President promptly answered: "I don't see why the papers keep marrying me to old ladies all the while—I wonder why they don't say I am engaged to marry her daughter." It was natural that gossip should connect his name with the handsome widow of his former friend, rather than with the beautiful daughter of twenty-two, to whom, since the death of her father, he had stood



almost *in loco parentis*. During her father's life he had been an ever welcome guest in the house, had supplied her with her first baby carriage, and after Mr. Folsom's death, he had, as administrator of the estate, won the heart of the little girl of thirteen by allowing her to copy certain legal papers connected with her father's affairs. He had encouraged her to call him "Uncle Cleve," and had given her a frisky bull-terrier puppy. When she entered college, Mayor Cleveland, of Buffalo, had asked permission to write to her, being conscious for the first time that she was now a woman, and had kept her college room bright with flowers.

When Mr. Cleveland was notified of his nomination for Governor of New York, "Frank," as he always called her, had attended with her mother. Later, she had occupied the Governor's box upon public occasions, and had received visits from him upon his frequent trips to Buffalo, upon one of which she had annoyed His Excellency by keeping him waiting for a reception. She had not been able to attend his inauguration as President, but had gone with her mother to pay him a visit at the White House a few months later.

On the whole, the only relationship of which the public was aware was something very much like guardianship, although Mr. Cleveland had never been her legal guardian. By degrees that relationship had changed, and before her commencement day she had given her consent to become "the first lady of the land." It was his wise counsel which had carried her through to the degree; and it was in accordance with his wishes that she made her trip to Europe.

Upon her arrival in New York, Miss Folsom was an object of such enthusiastic interest that, in order to avoid reporters, she was transferred to a tender and landed at

an uptown pier. But the next morning small newsboys, with characteristic disregard of fact and chronology, went about the streets calling, "Here's your morning *Sun*; all about the President's wife." Before the end of that day a definite announcement appeared.

On June 2, 1886, the wedding took place, according to schedule, in the Blue Room of the White House, the Reverend Dr. Sunderland officiating, and using a ceremony written especially for the occasion, but materially revised and condensed by the President. In it the bride is made to promise "to love . . . honor, comfort, and keep." The papers delighted in the fact that the bride's veil was six yards long; the President, that the list of guests was so short as to avoid the sensation of a function, there being all told only thirty-one persons present, including the bride and groom. A host, however, was represented by urgent requests that certain garments forwarded to Miss Folsom be worn at the wedding and returned as souvenirs. Amid the deluge of letters inevitable to such an event was the following, from Joe James, a Chinese resident of Philadelphia:

Mister President:

I am glad you marrie to bear plenty good fruits to the nation, and I congratulate to your marriage all enjoy yourself. I read your letter you so kind to our Chinese living here, and instruct the Government to protect the Chinese and be please to live everywhere. So I thank your kindness ever so much. I heard you on June 2d to be marrie. So I send a little present to you and the bride. I hope you enjoy yourself to received it. One china ivory fan, with sandalwood box, for the bride; one ivory card-case for the President, all sent by mail. I hope God bless you in prosperity in all things.



The letter bears the writer's signature in Chinese as well as in English. A few days later Joe James's Oriental heart was made glad by an autograph letter of thanks from the President of the United States.

Immediately after the wedding, the President and his bride repaired to Deer Park, in the mountains of Maryland; and it was not long before they were experiencing, to a painful degree, the sensation of being exploited before an eager public. A President on a honeymoon was something of a gold mine to ambitious reporters with eyes on space. No incident of the life at the Deer Park lodge could be too trivial for use, and the President and his wife were literally compassed about with reporters. The persecutors erected a whispering post opposite the cottage and, armed with powerful field glasses, settled down to the task of telling the public how a newly married President of the United States passes his time.

"They have," wrote Mr. Cleveland to the *New York Evening Post*, "used the enormous power of the modern newspaper to perpetuate and disseminate a colossal impertinence, and have done it, not as professional gossips and tattlers, but as the guides and instructors of the public in conduct and morals. And they have done it, not to a private citizen, but to the President of the United States, thereby lifting their offence into the gaze of the whole world, and doing their utmost to make American journalism contemptible in the estimation of people of good breeding everywhere."

But Mr. Cleveland was mistaken if he thought that the people were not interested in his affairs. The newspapers, while certainly sufficiently contemptible in the President's eyes, were merely doing their best to live up to the expectations of their readers. Every item of news or gossip concerning the august couple was eagerly



scanned by an interested public. When the *Elmira Gazette* declared: "President Cleveland is not dead-heading during his honeymoon. He pays for his special train to Deer Park, pays for his cottage, pays for his board, and pays for his horses. That is the kind of President he is," its readers were grateful for the information. When the *Union* adorned its columns with the words: "The word 'obey' was not included in the vows," another worthy group was gratified. And when the *Springfield Republican*, with an eye to local glory worthy of a professional western town boomer, called attention to the fact that the bride and groom were both descended from early settlers of Springfield, it scored a scoop in that section of the country. "In the land granted by the town to the men of about 1640," it said, "the lot of Henry Burt, Mr. Cleveland's ancestor, lay next to the lot of John Harmon, Mrs. Cleveland's ancestor. The Burts and Harmons lived out their allotted days in humdrum fashion; the children came and the old folks died, the years went on, and in due time President Cleveland married Miss Folsom. And so two family trees that were planted side by side in Springfield branched out until they are now entwined in the White House."

The Honorable Chauncey M. Depew, writing to Dan Lamont, as Republican politician to Democratic politician, gave this practical view of the meaning of a bride in the White House: "My only regret about it is that it will be so much harder for us to win against both Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland."

But winning was little in the President's thoughts. He had won.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CLEVELAND AND THE VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

*"I have considered the pension list of the Republic a roll of honor."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

IT has ever been easy to arouse popular excitement upon the subject of the treatment of wounded or disabled soldiers, and this noble sentiment has been often played upon by designing men. Moreover, the Democratic party has always been compelled to deal with more than usual caution with the question when it affected soldiers who served in the Federal ranks during the Civil War, as any unwillingness to pass pension bills for such soldiers was certain to be interpreted as reflecting sympathy for the lost cause. For this reason Grover Cleveland, as he looked over the pension system of the nation of which he was the chosen President, must have summoned all his courage. To allow the scandals which had developed to pass unrebuked was impossible for a man with his views of the duty of a President; to attempt to end them was to bring down more abuse from his enemies in both political parties.

Under a just system of army pensions the maximum of expenditure on account of any war is reached within eight or ten years of its close. Thereafter death steadily diminishes the number of legitimate pensioners, and the size of the disbursement on their account. In 1866 there had been 126,722 pensioners drawing from the public



treasury, all told, about thirteen and a half million dollars annually. As the years passed these numbers steadily increased until, in 1873, there were more than 238,000 names on the roll, which called for some \$29,000,000 a year. From that time, mortality should have materially reduced the number of pensions; and if the congressional demagogues had kept their hands off, this would certainly have happened.

But on January 25, 1879, was passed the Arrears of Pensions Act, which allowed every successful claimant to recover the amount to which he would have been entitled if the pension had been granted at the time the disability occurred. This placed a tremendous premium upon deception and fraud. Old soldiers whose wounds were long since healed began to discover that, after all, their injuries had been very serious. Men who had had an attack of fever in the army persuaded themselves that every ill they had since suffered was due to it. Before the passage of the act, the average of new claims had been 1,597 monthly; after its passage the average leaped to more than 10,000 a month, while thousands of claims already rejected were revived and pushed through. As a result, by the year 1885, when Grover Cleveland became President, there were 345,125 pensioners, drawing yearly more than sixty-five and a half million dollars, and the list was being steadily extended by the addition of names which represented only the most fantastic claims upon public bounty.

Here, then, was a subject worthy of a President's best efforts. For to reform such a system would be not only to stop the robbery of the public treasury, but would remove from a noble body of heroes a stigma which the selfish designs of unworthy schemers had fastened upon it. To be an honored list, a veteran pension roll must



be a pure list, and every name entered by fraud is an injury which all honest soldiers resent.

Mr. Cleveland, while anxious that the country should show not only a just but a generous appreciation of the services of the country's defenders, was determined that so far as was possible the money appropriated for pensions should be devoted to those who had suffered in the nation's service, and that such men should never find themselves "side by side on the pension roll with those who have been tempted to attribute the natural ills to which humanity is heir to service in the Army." In his first annual message to Congress he used the words: "It is fully as important that the rolls should be cleansed of all those who by fraud have secured a place therein, as that meritorious claims should be speedily examined and adjusted." For he was conscious of the existence of practices which must be attacked as soon as the full body of facts was in his possession.

These facts were of a character that would not bear the light of day. Conscienceless profiteers, intent upon coining into gold a noble public sentiment, had adopted the practice of disregarding the decisions of the Pension Bureau, and taking spurious claims directly to Congress in the form of private pension bills, which dishonest manipulators or too sentimental patriots steered through, as secretly as the rules would allow. It was a practice safe as well as profitable, for few politicians dared to resist, lest they be regarded as unpatriotic.

Mr. Cleveland was not in an ideal position to become a champion of the people against this insidious form of corruption; for, lurking in the shadow, ready to be again brought forward at a moment's notice, was the figure of a certain George Brinski, native of Poland, who had served in the ranks of the Federal Army as the hired

substitute of one Grover Cleveland, Assistant District Attorney of Erie County. It mattered not at all that Mr. Cleveland's action in avoiding military service had been above reproach, in strict accord with law, and in response to the demands of filial duty. The circumstances were clear in his own memory, and they left his conscience void of offense: a widowed mother, watching her three sons "draw straws" from the family Bible to decide which of the three should remain at home to bear the unromantic burdens of bread-winner—this was the picture which a mention of the Civil War first called to his mind. Then came the memory of the draft, the hiring of a substitute when he might properly have pleaded exemption; and then the slanderous attacks of 1884 which had exhibited him as little better than a deserter. Well he knew that any attempt on his part to check the easy flow of fraudulent pensions would cause the old fires to burn again with the light of new slanders, but he knew that he must make the attempt.

According to the habit which had made him a terror to the evildoers of Buffalo and Albany, he turned his attention to a study of the pension system in general, and of the individual bills presented for his signature. The results were amazing. Hundreds of bills had been passed by Congress on the most fantastic and fraudulent claims.

Cuthbert Stone had been voted a pension on the ground that he had incurred a pensionable disability during his "long and faithful service" in the Army. The records of the War Department, however, showed that he enlisted October 25, 1861, and was reported as deserted from December 31st of that year until November, 1864. He was mustered out with his company some two months after the latter date, with no evidence of disability, and had filed no claim for pension until 1881, when he al-



leged that he contracted a disability in the winter of 1863. He subsequently changed this date, and alleged that the disease was contracted "while he was being carried from place to place as a prisoner, he having been tried by court martial in 1862, for desertion, and sentenced to imprisonment until the expiration of his term of enlistment." It thus appeared by his own admission that Cuthbert Stone had spent most of his time in desertion, or in imprisonment for desertion; and yet a committee of Congress reported in favor of granting him a pension on account of the "long and faithful service and the high character of the claimant"! Mr. Cleveland withheld his consent, on the ground that "the allowance of this claim would, in my opinion, be a travesty upon our whole scheme of pensions, and an insult to every decent veteran soldier."

William Bishop had hired himself as a substitute in March, 1865, and had been mustered out in May of that year, having spent more than a month of the intervening time in hospital with the measles. Congress passed a bill, giving him a pension, which Mr. Cleveland vetoed with the remark: "This is the military record of this soldier, who remained in the army one month and seventeen days, having entered it as a substitute at a time when high bounties were paid. Fifteen years after this brilliant service and this terrific encounter with the measles, and on the 28th day of June, 1880, the claimant discovered that his attack of the measles had some relation to his army enrollment, and that this disease had 'settled in his eyes, also affecting his spinal column.' This claim was rejected by the pension bureau, and I have no doubt of the correctness of its determination."

Another bill proposed to grant a pension to one Charles Glamann, who left the service in 1865 without having made any claim of disability, but fifteen years



later alleged that he had been struck with a brick by a comrade with whom he had got into a row, and injured in the left arm. Mr. Cleveland concludes his veto in this case with the remark: "I believe that if the veterans of the war knew all that was going on in the way of granting pensions by private bills, they would be more disgusted than any other class of our citizens."

Still another was the case of Mary A. Van Etten, who was allowed a pension because of the drowning of her husband in 1875. To which Mr. Cleveland objects: "It is claimed that in an effort to drive across that bay in a buggy with his young son the buggy was overturned and both were drowned. The application for pension was based upon the theory that during his military service the deceased soldier contracted rheumatism, which so interfered with his ability to save himself by swimming that his death may be fairly traced to a disability incurred in the service. . . . He was mustered out in 1863, and though he lived twelve years thereafter, it does not appear that he ever applied for a pension; and, though he was drowned in 1875, his widow apparently did not connect his military service with his death until ten years thereafter. It seems to me that there is such an entire absence of direct and tangible evidence that the death of this soldier resulted from an incident of his service that the granting of a pension upon such a theory is not justified."

Of one Wilson he wrote: "Whatever else may be said of the claimant's achievements during his short military career, it must be conceded that he accumulated a great deal of disability."

One of the vetoes which caused the most violent abuse of Mr. Cleveland was that of a bill giving a pension to Sallie Ann Bradley, who had been presented as a candidate for governmental support as being the very mother

of heroic sacrifice. According to her petition, her husband and her four sons had been Union soldiers. Two of the sons were pictured as slain on the field of battle, a third had his arm torn off by a shell, and the fourth lost an eye in the gallant defence of his country. Her husband was described as a fighting member of a fighting regiment, the 24th Ohio, later transferred to the gallant 18th Ohio, only to fall, terribly wounded, in "Pap" Thomas's fight before Nashville. Maimed, but still heroic, he had dragged out his shattered life until 1880, drawing the pitiful pittance of four dollars a month; and then, worn out by wounds that would not heal, had passed to the other shore, leaving his wife, poor, broken by sorrow and sickness, and compelled to live on charity as an inmate of the County Infirmary, because her surviving sons were too crippled to earn enough to sustain her in her declining years.

Upon the face of the facts as stated, Sallie Ann Bradley certainly merited a liberal pension, as the widow of a hero whose death had been due solely to wounds received in battle. All she asked was eight dollars a month, and Congress had approved her prayer; but the President, having taken the trouble to investigate the facts, vetoed the bill, and was promptly denounced. The Clinton County *Democrat* of Wilmington, Ohio, on July 29, 1886, having investigated the case, sustained the President, giving its readers the following summary of the actual facts, as gathered from the neighbors of the widow, and from an inspection of what remained of her shattered family:

"The husband's name was T. J. Bradley. *He was not in the battle of Nashville*, and could not, therefore, have fallen terribly wounded in 'Pap' Thomas's fight. *He choked to death on a piece of beef when gorging himself while on a drunken spree*, and, therefore, did not go to



camp on the other shore when worn out with wounds and old age. So much for the old man.

"There were four sons who were in the service, viz.: Robert, John, Carey, and James. *They all came home from the war*, so that two of them could not have been shot dead on the battle field. Two of them, John and James, are living, so that they could not have been the ones who are said to have been shot dead. Of the others, *Robert died of yellow fever in Memphis several years after the war, while Carey committed suicide when on a spree a few years ago* at his home in Bentonville, Adams County, Ohio. They were not shot on the battle field.

"Now for the eye and arm story. John is the one about whom the anecdote is told that he had his eye shot out. . . . He is a shoemaker by trade, and the Democratic postmaster of Bentonville, *and lost his eye while working at his trade from a piece of heel nail striking it* when repairing a pair of boots. *James was shot in the arm at Nashville, but it was not torn off by a shell.* Mrs. Bradley *never was in the County Infirmary*, and her boys are not unable to support her by reason of disabilities produced from wounds received in the army. *The Republican Senate twice rejected the bill to pension Mrs. Bradley*, one of the bills having been introduced by that valiant lover of the soldiers, Alphonso Hart.

"These are the facts, as can be vouched for by hundreds of persons in Adams County. If Mrs. Bradley is entitled to a pension because she is poor and in need, there are thousands and tens of thousands of similar cases in the United States, equally needy, who should be pensioned. If her case is put upon that ground, she is no better than all the other poor and needy widows in the country, and if one of them is to be pensioned, there should be a bill passed to put them all on the list. But



it is not from any love of Sallie Ann Bradley that all this bluster is being made, nor because she is any more worthy of a pension, but because it is hoped that by misstating the facts a little political capital may be made."

House Bill No. 155 bestowed a pension on a man who never left the state in which he enlisted, and deserted while there. He was finally discharged on a surgeon's certificate for disability, incurred by a fall from his own wagon, the certificate bearing the endorsement: "Never did a day's duty—is utterly worthless and unfit for the veteran reserve corps." This, too, the President vetoed, supplying the public with a full bill of particulars, drawn with his unfailing frankness.

In another case, Mr. Cleveland declared that the "injury complained of existed prior to . . . enlistment," adding the scornful comment: "The proposed beneficiary, after all these disabilities had occurred, passed an examination as to his physical fitness for re-enlistment, and actually did enlist, and served till finally mustered out at the close of the war."

Another bill he indignantly rejected because the name of the soldier in question "is not borne upon any of the rolls of the regiment he alleges he was on his way to join," when injured. "If the wounds were received as described," another veto announced, "there is certainly no necessary connection between them and death fourteen years afterwards from neuralgia of the heart." In refusing a grant to a widow, he wrote of the departed husband: "He never did a day's service," and was "drowned in a canal six miles from his home" after having deserted from the army. "Those who prosecute claims . . . have grown very bold when cases of this description are presented for consideration." "It is stated that about five years ago," another message declared, "while the claimant

was gathering dandelions . . . his leg broke . . . [but] it is not evident that the fracture had anything to do with . . . military service." And he summed up both his point of view and his exasperation in the cutting phrase: "We are dealing with pensions, and not with gratuities."

All these bills and many similar ones President Cleveland vetoed, thus giving proof of heartless indifference to claims on the public treasury of men bearing a strange variety of singularly unheroic and unmilitary wounds, or of women demanding compensation for the unpatriotic deaths of husbands, little cherished during life.

Month after month, the dreary process went on, the President striving, amid a myriad of imperious calls upon his time, to do justice to the men who deserved well of the state, by refusing to allow their money to be given to those who merited only contempt. But even his unusual capacity for work was insufficient for the task. "There have lately been presented to me on the same day," he once declared, ". . . nearly 240 special bills granting and increasing pensions, and restoring to the pension list the names of parties which for cause have been dropped." And upon another occasion he indignantly wrote: "During the present session of Congress, 493 special pension bills have been submitted to me, and I am advised that 111 more have received the favorable action of both houses of Congress and will be presented within a day or two, making over 600 of these bills which have been passed up to this time during the present session, nearly three times the number passed at any entire session since the year 1861. . . . I have now more than 130 of these bills before me awaiting executive action. It will be impossible to bestow upon them the examination they



deserve, and many will probably become operative which should be rejected."

This was, of course, true. It was physically impossible for him to study each bill presented with the care necessary for a sound judgment upon its merits, but he did so study and veto 108 between March 10 and August 17, 1886, and in the case of each prepared, with his own hand, a set of reasons for its rejection. These Mss. lie before me as I write, a monument to the conscientious care with which Grover Cleveland guarded the interests of the men who saved the Union.

In January, 1887, Congress passed a pension bill which threatened worse results even than those of the Arrears Act of 1879. Under the latter it was still necessary for a claimant to show that his present disabilities were directly due to service in the army. Under the proposed Dependent Pension Bill any man who had served ninety days in the army during any war need only to claim that he could not earn his living, and the Government would give him from six to twelve dollars a month. This bill received the votes of an overwhelming majority in the Senate and the House, and an energetic and influential section of the Grand Army of the Republic strongly urged the President to approve it.

Instead, he sent to Congress, on February 11th, a veto message denouncing the measure as placing a premium upon fraud, by tempting honest men to quit work and seek to live by public charity. He declared himself unwilling to believe that the vast army of Union soldiers who, "having been disabled by the casualties of war, justly regard the present pension roll on which appear their names as a roll of honor, desire . . . to be confounded with those who through such a bill as this are willing to be objects of simple charity." He declared that



"the race after the pensions offered by this bill would not only stimulate weakness and pretended incapacity for labor, but would be a further premium on mendacity and dishonesty."

The next day Horace White wrote:

My dear Mr. Cleveland:

I once knew a clergyman who, on being asked what his forte was, replied that he was 'happy at funerals.' I think that you are happy at vetoes, and of all your vetoes that I have seen that of the Pauper Pension Bill is the happiest and weightiest.

Charles Francis Adams later commended this veto in the picturesque paragraph:

"We had seen every dead-beat, and malingerer, every bummer, bounty-jumper, and suspected deserter . . . rush to the front as the greedy claimant of public bounty. If there was any man whose army record had been otherwise than creditable . . . we soon heard of him as the claimant of a back pension . . . or as being in the regular receipt of his monthly stipend. . . . We therefore felt a keen sense of relief when, in February, 1887, President Cleveland sent in his veto of the Dependent Pension Bill, which put a premium on self-abasement and perjury."

But while it is true that President Cleveland used the veto to a greater extent than any other President, and while it is true that but one pension bill had been vetoed before his administration, it is also true that more pension bills became laws by his signature than by that of any other President up to that time. During the years 1886 and 1887 he approved 863 private pension acts,

being 77 more than Presidents Grant and Hayes approved in twelve years, and 127 more than Presidents Garfield and Arthur approved in four years. In addition he approved an act which increased to twelve dollars a month the pensions of some 80,000 widows, minor, and dependent relatives, of Union soldiers, and an act which increased the pensions of 10,030 crippled and maimed Union soldiers. It was also with his approval that more than 33,000 Mexican war veterans or their widows were placed upon the lists.

The net gain to the pension rolls is thus graphically summed up in a memorandum found among Mr. Cleveland's papers:

"On July 1, 1883, there were upon the pension rolls 303,658 pensioners of all classes.

"On July 1, 1885, there were . . . 345,125 . . . a net gain during the last two years of Republican rule . . . of 41,467 pensioners.

"On the first day of July, 1887, . . . there were upon the pension rolls 402,000 pensioners . . . of all classes.

"Here is a net gain to the rolls in two years under Democratic rule of 56,875, as against a net gain of 41,467 pensioners during the last two years of Republican rule, or 15,408 to the advantage of the Democratic administration and this, too, in the face of the fact that the clerical force of the Bureau of Pensions has been reduced 124 within the past two years, and that the death rate among the old soldiers is rapidly increasing."

Mr. Cleveland himself was justly proud of his record in regard to veterans, and confident that the soldiers themselves would appreciate the meaning of his vetoes if given a chance to read them. "He told me," wrote Richard Watson Gilder, in one of those curious little pencil memo-



randa which he kept of his conversations with the President, that "he would want no better campaign document than a pamphlet containing all his pension vetoes placed in every G. A. R. post."

But Mr. Cleveland's record was not placed in G. A. R. posts. Instead, attention was diverted from the facts by spectacular accusations. The papers teemed with abuse. He was the enemy of the veteran, the foe to the cause that triumphed, the shirker who had avoided his duty during the war that saved the nation.

In the meantime Mr. Cleveland exposed himself to attack from another angle, and in so doing proved again his broad-mindedness and his courage. On April 30, 1887, Adjutant-General Drum wrote to Secretary Endicott:

SIR:

I have the honor to state that there are now in this office, stored in one of the attic rooms of the building, a number of Union flags captured in action, but recovered on the fall of the Confederacy and forwarded to the War Department for safekeeping, together with a number of Confederate flags which the fortunes of war placed in our hands during the late Civil War.

While in the past favorable action has been taken on applications properly supported for the return of Union flags to organizations representing survivors of the military regiments in the service of the Government, I beg to submit that it would be a graceful act to anticipate future requests of this nature, and venture to suggest the propriety of returning all the flags (Union and Confederate) to the authorities of the respective states in which the regiments which bore these colors were



organized, for such final disposition as they may determine. . . .

Very truly yours,

R. C. DRUM,  
Adjutant-General.

Anxious always to restore harmony between the North and the South, and feeling that this suggestion offered a chance to show his spirit of conciliation, the President gave his verbal assent, without taking the precaution to examine the law as to his powers in the matter. To his mind it was a course so manifestly wise and proper as to be beyond question. On May 26, 1887, therefore, Secretary Endicott returned the proposition to the Adjutant-General, endorsed, "The within recommendation approved by the President."

There seemed no reason to suppose that there would be much opposition. General Drum, who had made the proposal, was a Republican and a member of the Grand Army of the Republic. The idea was clearly in line with the developments of recent years. It was true that in 1872 the Massachusetts Legislature had formally denounced Senator Sumner for having offered in the United States Senate a resolution providing "that the names of battles with fellow citizens shall not be continued in the Army Register, or placed on the regimental colors of the United States." But it was also true that fourteen months later that same legislature had rescinded the censure, thus acknowledging its error, and illustrating the trend of the times, which was toward a policy of conciliation and friendship with the South.

Since that time, the number of those whose aim it was to chisel deeper the record of civil strife had presumably grown steadily smaller and the custom of sum-

moning the veteran organizations of North and South to joint celebrations upon former battle fields had become encouragingly common. At it chanced, less than a month after sanctioning the return of the flags, President Cleveland received an invitation to just such a joint celebration, to be held at Gettysburg, and his answer shows the spirit in which he had met General Drum's suggestion:

Executive Mansion, Washington.

*June 24, 1887.*

MR. JOHN W. FRAZIER,  
Secretary, &c.

My dear Sir:

I have received your invitation to attend as a guest of the Philadelphia Brigade, a reunion of Ex-Confederate soldiers of Pickett's Division who survived their terrible charge at Gettysburg, and those of the Union Army still living, by whom it was heroically resisted.

The fraternal meeting of these soldiers, upon the battle field where twenty-four years ago in deadly fray they fiercely sought each other's lives, where they saw their comrades fall and where all their thoughts were of vengeance and destruction, will illustrate the generous impulse of brave men and their honest desire for peace and reconciliation.

The friendly assault there to be made will be resistless because inspired by American chivalry; and its result will be glorious because conquered hearts will be its trophies of success. Thereafter this battle field will be consecrated by a victory, which shall presage the end of the bitterness of strife, the exposure of the insincerity which conceals hatred by professions of kindness, the condemnation of frenzied appeals to passion for unworthy purposes,



and the beating down of all that stands in the way of the destiny of our united Country.

While those who fought and who have so much to forgive, lead in the pleasant ways of peace, how wicked appear the traffic in sectional hate, and the betrayal of patriotic sentiment.

It surely cannot be wrong to desire the settled quiet which lights for our entire Country the path to prosperity and greatness; nor need the lessons of the war be forgotten and its results jeopardized, in the wish for that genuine fraternity which insures national pride and glory.

I should be very glad to accept your invitation and be with you at this interesting reunion; but other arrangements already made, and my official duties here, will prevent my doing so.

Hoping that the occasion will be as successful and useful as its promoters can desire, I am,

Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Conscious of his own desire to see the "wounds that once were" healed by a new sense of brotherhood between the North and the South, the Unionist and the Confederate, he was clearly entitled to count upon a similar feeling throughout the nation, and as clearly under obligation to do what he could to foster it. The suggestion of General Drum had appeared a case in point, and his approval had been hearty and generous. But President Cleveland's ceaseless activity for civil service reform, and for the purification of the pension rolls, had made for him and for his administration a body of enemies who eagerly seized upon the incident of the flags as a rallying cry. His act was denounced as a recognition of the



"Lost Cause." Letters of protest and resolutions of denunciation poured in. "For this," said one of the Southern papers, "the cry of treason rang out upon the air, and the noble impulses of a loyal and patriotic heart have been denounced by those who would perpetuate sectional prejudices and the passions of war to the detriment of the common good."

It was, unfortunately, true. The cry of rage was taken up by leaders whose vision was too narrow and whose prejudices were too dominant to enable them to understand such an action. Governor Foraker of Ohio announced, "No rebel flags will be surrendered while I am Governor," and the friends of a belated war spirit applauded him to the echo. General Sherman, who should have realized that the war was over, scornfully declared that Drum, as a noncombatant who had never captured a standard, could not be expected to understand what it means to a veteran: "He did not think of the blood and torture of battle; nor can Endicott, the Secretary of War, or Mr. Cleveland."

Mr. Cleveland was not, it is true, thinking of "blood and torture," he was thinking of a reunited nation; but he now realized that, in his eagerness, he had gone beyond the limits of his constitutional powers. Technically, the captured rebel flags were the property of the nation, not to be alienated without the consent of Congress.

Among Mr. Cleveland's private papers is the following memorandum, written in his own hand, evidently a press notice:

"The right of the Department to make the return being questioned by the President, such right was distinctly asserted and precedents alleged, and therefore his verbal assent was given to the proposed action. The matter was dismissed from his mind until comment thereupon within

the last day or two brought it again to his attention, when upon examining the law and considering the subject more carefully he satisfied himself that no disposition of these flags could be made without Congressional action, whereupon he directed a suspension of operations by the letter above published."

That letter reads as follows:

Executive Mansion, Washington.

*June 15, 1887.*

To

THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

I have today considered, with more care than when the subject was orally presented to me, the action of your Department directing letters to be addressed to the Governors of all the States, offering to return, if desired, to the loyal States the Union flags captured in the War of the Rebellion by the Confederate forces and afterwards recovered by Government troops, and to the Confederate States the flags captured by the Union forces, all of which for many years have been packed in boxes and stored in the cellar and attic of the War Department.

I am of the opinion that the return of these flags in the manner thus contemplated is not authorized by existing law nor justified as an Executive act.

I request, therefore, that no further steps be taken in the matter, except to examine and inventory these flags and adopt proper measures for their preservation. Any directions as to the final disposition of them should originate with Congress.

Yours truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

This was, of course, the proper step under the circumstances. His impulse had been right, but his action



had been in excess of the constitutional limits of his power. Unintentionally, he had encroached upon the domain of the legislative branch of the Government, and he therefore publicly acknowledged his error. The spirit of his action, and the spirit of his recantation, should have disarmed criticism.

But his bitter enemies were in no frame of mind to appreciate the one, or to forego the opportunity of making capital out of the other. Again the press and the platform teemed with violent, unreasoning abuse. "May God palsy the hand that wrote the order! May God palsy the tongue that dictated it!" screamed General Fairchild, Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in a meeting in Association Hall in Harlem. And less conspicuous veterans, fired by his unholy spirit, poured in upon the President a volley of insulting letters, calling him "viper," "traitor," "contemptible politician," "unworthy to breathe the air of heaven," "a skulker," "a hater of Union soldiers," "the oppressor of the widow and the fatherless."

In comment upon this senseless abuse, the *Nation*, on June 23, 1887, declared, in language more just than discreet:

"The awful cursing in which Gen. Fairchild indulged on hearing the news at the meeting of a Grand Army post last week in this city, gives a foretaste of the use which will be made of the order, in spite of its having been revoked. He shouted for God Almighty to help him in this matter by killing the President with two strokes of paralysis, one in the hand and the second in the brain, as if God Almighty had not done enough in this line by permitting the slaughter of 300,000 young men in the four years between 1861 and 1865. We suggest now that if there has to be any further loss of life in this quarrel,



Gen. Fairchild should do his own killing. If he or any other veteran thinks the President ought to die for restoring the captured flags, he must not blasphemously call on God to slay him, but step up like a man and assassinate him himself. If anything can justify the President's course, however, it would be talk like this."

Governor Foraker insultingly announced that, with these cries ringing in his ears, the President "sneaked like a whipped spaniel." But the President did not "sneak"; he only admitted—reluctantly and a little sadly—that it was still too soon for open generosity to the conquered South.

It is only just to say of the flag incident, as Mr. Cleveland himself said of the question of pension vetoes, that had the Grand Army posts been fully aware of the facts, they would have had little sympathy with these bitter denunciations of their President. That great, patriotic organization had been in existence for twenty-two years. It embraced the best class of veterans of the Civil War, men of every political faith, every religious sect, every calling. It commanded universal respect, not alone in the North, but in the South as well. Founded upon a patriotic impulse, its general aim was the promotion of brotherhood among the brave. It distinctly discarded partisan politics, and taught that the broadest independence of the citizen is the best training for the loyal soldier. But Grand Army posts had been deliberately and maliciously fed upon falsehood. Demagogues within and demagogues without the order had steadily misled their veteran brothers regarding the attitude and the methods of Mr. Cleveland, thus turning the organization into the forbidden path of party politics. "Little by little, step by step," commented the *Philadelphia Times* of July 9, 1887, "such political brawlers as Fairchild and

Tuttle crawled into responsible leadership," and they so poisoned the minds of many worthy veterans that the very sound of the President's name threw them into a fury of resentment.

The annual encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic was an event of national importance, worthy of the sacrifice of the nation's time which the presence of a chief executive always involves. Before the incident of the flags had occurred, the President had tentatively accepted an invitation to visit the Grand Army at its next encampment, to be held in St. Louis in the month of September. The committee had been hearty and generous in extending the invitation, and the President had accepted upon the assumption that they expressed the desires of the organization. No sooner did it become publicly known, however, that Mr. Cleveland was to be present, than a howl of rage arose from certain members who believed, or pretended to believe, that the President was the enemy of the veteran. Some announced, with explanations more eloquent than seemly, that they would not go to the reunion if Grover Cleveland was to be there; others proclaimed their intention to see that the President was properly insulted if he ventured to come, while the more lawless threatened personal violence.

At first the reason, or pretext, for such statements was his pension record, and later the affair of the flags gave new ammunition, which his enemies fired recklessly. Mitchell Post No. 45 drew up resolutions declaring that, by his order to return the Confederate flags, the President had forfeited the esteem of every faithful Union soldier and given unpardonable offense to the loyal patriotic people of the country; that by this act he had given evidence, either of his sympathy with the rebellion, or of his utter



inability to appreciate the motives which induced patriots to enlist for the maintenance of the Union; that by this act he had taken away from the rising generation one incentive to loyalty and patriotism, proving thereby that treason is not to be regarded as dishonorable, and that, though men may plot the overthrow of the Government, they are, after all is over, to be held in as high repute as patriots; "that Catiline may sit side by side with Cicero; that Arnold may rear as proud a crest as Washington, and that Davis may be canonized in the affections of the people as well as the martyr, Lincoln. . . . *Resolved*, that in view of the expected presence of President Cleveland during the National Encampment of the G. A. R. at St. Louis, the chief authorities of our Order be requested to remove the Encampment in September next from St. Louis to some other city. . . ."

On June 24th, a committee appointed by the "Sam Rice Post" sent him a set of fiery resolutions. "The undersigned were appointed a committee," declared the accompanying letter, "to transmit to you the enclosed resolutions of the post, with an appropriate letter voicing, as fully as words may be made to do so, the feeling of the veterans who participated in the capture of the emblems of treason you so recently sought to place in positions of honor.

"We were instructed by unanimous vote to write these resolutions in burning letters of *red* on blood red paper, to enclose them in a blood red envelope and tie with crimson stained ribbon; thus emphasizing to you our heartfelt feelings symbolizing the burning loyalty which resents the sacrilege, and the field of blood from which these flags were snatched in the tumult of war. In the crimson hued band which binds this package we desire you to see the stream of blood ebbing from the heart of a



loyal soldier as he leaped upon the rebel line, grasped the rebel flag, furled and passed it to his comrades as he fell lifeless on the field, pierced by a traitor's bayonet or ball, thus with this blood red band binding together all loyal hearts and hands and glistening and brightening as year after year sheds its historic light on the pages of time. But you have undertaken to undo all this by your mad act, conceived no doubt in a spirit of pique against the Grand Army of the Republic. You had no thought of, at least no regard for, the patriotic sentiment that warms the hearts of loyal soldiers.

"We would excuse you if this were simply your own private act, for we know full well that a man who performed his duty to his country in its time of peril by a *substitute* cannot enter into the true meaning of such a monstrous act as yours . . . as you could . . . had you heard with us the oft repeated 'Rebel Yell' that meant death or wounds and groans and shattered limbs; or had you met disease and seeds of consuming death on the field, march, and bivouac, or been placed face to face with the lipless mouth of gaunt relentless famine as it mocked at want and stalked unrebuked in southern prison pens with these flags floating over them in haughty defiance of the nation's power and the common rules of civilized warfare; or had you in search of freedom, aye, of bread, been hunted through southern swamps and woodlands by savage bloodhounds and listened to their horrid baying as they drew nearer and nearer on your track, set on by men who carried these same flags. . . .

"We desire that you may realize with us that the return of these flags, which do not represent property so much as principle, is deadly and destructive to every patriotic impulse. These flags can now have no other meaning than a representation of treason. There ought

to be in this land to-day no one who would own them. Of value they have none, save as dishonored, hidden, disowned, they are visible warnings for the future: but placed as you propose, in the hands of those who carried them in war, who have been slowly learning to feel the shame of their treason, to be held in reverence and as sacred relics as of a just cause and their reception to be made as they say 'a season of rejoicing,' is to insult the Union dead, the loyal living, to give approval to treason and in fact to say to them, you can still adore treason, worship the heroes and relics of secession, declare your cause just and teach your children to hold in higher regard the 'stars and bars' of disunion than the 'stars and stripes' of the Union, and still fulfill the duty of a loyal citizen. . . .

"No, Mr. President, loyalty is not dead, it slumbereth not, nor does it sleep on its posts, and its watch fires are brightly burning. 'The penalty of treason is death.' It is and shall be made odious. The great Grand Army of the Republic have sworn it."

There was much more, equally violent, equally foolish, in the letter; but the "Resolutions," actually typewritten on blood-red paper, enclosed in a blood-red envelope and tied with a crimson-stained ribbon, though, for obvious reasons, not written in burning letters of red, represent the Mt. Everest of insult:

*"Be It Resolved by Sam Rice Post G. A. R. Department of Iowa:* That we do hereby protest against the surrender of the rebel flags to the men who bore them in their mad attempt to destroy the country, either by the president of the United States or by Congress.

"That the recent attempt to do so by the unauthorized act of the president was but an attempt to accomplish



through him what they failed to do on the field of battle [re-capture the flags]. . . .

"That by this act of truculency and subserviency to treason Grover Cleveland has forfeited all claim to respect from those who fought to capture these emblems of treason, and from all who respect the valor and sacrifice of the Union soldiers, and that he has shown himself by this act more plainly, if possible, than before, that he is not only no friend to the Union soldier, but that what love and sympathy his nature is capable of goes out to the soldiers of the other side, and that in his readiness to serve them and solidify the Southern feeling, he has even violated his oath of office, and shown himself wholly unworthy of the trust reposed in him as chief magistrate of the Nation. . . .

"That in view of this bold attempt of a leader of a great party to break down all barriers and destroy all distinctions between loyalty and treason, patriotism and disunion, between government and anarchy, we recognize with ten-fold more force than ever the need of keeping alive the posts of the Grand Army of the Republic in which none can enter on whom the stain of treason rests, as schools of loyalty, and to sow the seeds of true patriotism. . . .

"That we heartily approve the action of our Department Commander in entering his early protest against the great vetoer's presence at the National Encampment as an invited guest, and in his protest at this resurrection of rebel trophies, and also the protest from Iowa's loyal Governor in this behalf, as formerly, when the old flag was assailed, Iowa is at the front."

In August, at a reunion of the Army of West Virginia, at Wheeling, a huge banner of the President was suspended across the street down which the parade was



to pass. It was inscribed, "God bless our President, Commander-in-Chief of our Army and Navy." When the head of the first division, composed of Pennsylvania veterans, reached the picture, Post No. 41, which led the advance, went squarely under the flag. The succeeding posts, however, crowded into the gutter to avoid passing under the banner, and either drooped their colors or trailed them along the ground as they passed. As organization after organization went by in this manner, the excitement among the vast throng of spectators became intense, and cheers and hisses were alternately given as the banner was passed. During a halt caused by the great length of the column the action of some of the veterans became more marked, and curses and epithets were hurled at the picture. Meanwhile news of what was going on was spread far and wide, and soon the street was blocked with an excited mass. Democratic members of the G. A. R. began to tear off their badges and leave the ranks, while many officers of the marching posts hurried to and fro, urging their men over to the side of the street and commanding that the flags be trailed.

The excitement reached its height when an encampment of the Union Veterans' Legion of Pittsburgh reached the spot. The crowd had filled all the breadth of the street, leaving but a narrow lane along one curb for the column. The Legion, two hundred and fifty strong, struck a bee-line down the center of the street, the officers in front, clearing the way, and as they passed under the Cleveland banner with upright flag-staffs many of their members took off their hats and saluted. Immediately pandemonium was let loose, and while most of the G. A. R. men and their friends filled the air with hisses and groans, the Democrats cheered until they were

hoarse, while threats of violence were freely interchanged. However, the column passed on, and all danger was over, though during the remainder of the day the excitement was very great, and threats to tear down the flag were heard on all sides.

But the G. A. R. were not all hostile to the President. One veteran from the West, more friendly than literate, wrote:

My dear Sir:

. . . I served four years and six months in the rebellion. . . . My weight is 240. My Collor is 18 inches and in all this Flesh of mine I never seen such utter foolishness as some of the G. A. R. is making over the encampment: and to have one of our leeding statesmen Ex Gov Fairchild a man we all loved as a comrad to tak the stand he has take I must say I am uterly astoned of him and the Boodle Comrades he has with him . . . Pardon my boldness in writing and I would not do it ownly to show you that the G. A. R. is not all trying to make fools of the selves.

Despite such encouragement, however, it was evident to the President and his friends that the presidential office would certainly suffer insult, if indeed the President himself were not subjected to personal violence, if the intended visit to St. Louis were made. It was not easy, however, to recall the acceptance without giving countenance to the accusation, certain to be made, that Mr. Cleveland was afraid to go. The correspondence among his friends upon this delicate point is full of solicitude. "I want him to avoid having them say afterwards that he was frightened," wrote Secretary Whitney to Colonel Lamont, adding: "That's what the *World* and



the rest of that ilk will say unless between now and Monday morning there should come a general demand of public sentiment against it. I think it will come and the President can then peacefully yield to it if he thinks it judicious not to go. . . . I write this because I know the President begins to feel it his duty to the country to keep himself safe. It is his duty . . . but . . . until there is apparent a great deal of public demand against it, not in this little teapot of Washington, but from outside, he should adhere to his decision. Give out the fact that he is urged not to go, etc." And in a postscript he added, "Let the solicitude for his personal safety grow. . . . Don't check it, for Heaven's sake." From the point of view of "good politics," this was doubtless the wise method of handling the situation; but Mr. Cleveland's ideas were different. As soon as he was convinced that the visit would imperil the dignity of his great office, he sent Mayor Francis an open letter containing a straightforward statement of the facts, and flatly declaring his determination to remain at Washington, not in order to avoid personal danger, but that the office of Chief Executive might not be publicly insulted.

Passions aroused by civil war die hard, and almost two decades passed before a Republican President, Theodore Roosevelt, acting in harmony with a Republican Congress, realized Grover Cleveland's aim by restoring the Confederate flags. In February, 1905, a bill to that effect, and substantially identical with the one for which Mr. Cleveland had been so violently attacked, passed both houses unanimously, and without the formality of the yeas and nays.



## CHAPTER IX

### CLEVELAND AND THE WARDS OF THE NATION, THE AMERICAN INDIANS

*"The conscience of the people demands that the Indians  
be fairly and honestly treated as wards of the Government."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

WHEN Grover Cleveland became President, the status of the North American Indian was chaotic indeed. A few Indians had from time to time been admitted to citizenship, but as a whole the Indian was a man without law, a wild thing whose relationship to the soil which nourished him was like that of the bear, the wolf, or the coyote. The laws dealt with "the pack," not with the individual, and the rights of "the pack" were little regarded, even those which rested upon Indian treaties. From the beginning of the American Federal Union to the year 1871, when such formalities were abandoned, almost four hundred Indian treaties had been made; but they had seldom, if ever, been allowed to interfere with the plans of the white men.

The Supreme Court of the United States had frequently declared that an Indian title "was not inconsistent with the fee simple, the absolute ownership, being in other persons." Upon that theory the white man had seized the continent, and upon that theory he had administered it, despite frequent appeals from successive Presidents for justice to the red man. In his seventh annual address, Washington had called the attention of Congress to the fact that "to enforce upon the Indians

the observance of justice, it is indispensable that there shall be competent means of rendering justice to them"; and most, if not all, of his successors had made similar pleas. With equal regularity successive Congresses had failed to respond, the few instances in which either house proposed such laws proving abortive by virtue of a refusal of the other house to concur.

In theory, the tribe was sovereign within certain areas; in fact, membership in a tribe meant only such security as increasing tribal weakness, savagery fighting civilization, could guarantee, a quantity slowly but certainly tending from the first toward the absolute zero. This process, as inevitable as fate itself when backward races with decadent tribal institutions occupy land needed for expanding civilization, implies little more malicious wickedness than any other natural application of the law of the survival of the fittest. Did not this law operate, primitive races would be left in non-productive enjoyment of lands capable of supporting fifty times their populations; and all that can be hoped, even by the most idealistic friends of primitive peoples, is that the inevitable crowding-out process shall be conducted with as much consideration as just laws and generous administrations can afford.

By 1830, this crowding-out process, for lands east of the Mississippi River, had reached its inevitable result, and with solemn and not intentionally misleading promises that the new lands beyond the Father of Waters should be theirs and their tribes' forever, and without a hint that compulsion was contemplated by the enacting Congress, arrangements had been made to remove the Indians into the great, unorganized west. The argument was made to them that, while remaining in their old homes, they were under the control of the states in



which those homes lay, and therefore not within reach of the kindly friendship of the National Government. Thus tribe after tribe was persuaded to exchange its lands in the east for lands in the west, where the "Great Father" would see that their rights were protected. Established in their new homes, the Indians had been, for a time, allowed to enjoy the sense of independent sovereignty; and some, notably the Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks, Chickasaws, and Seminoles, for whom the beautiful Indian Territory was set aside, had developed some capacity for self-government and became known as the Five Civilized Tribes. For years before Mr. Cleveland's appearance in Federal affairs, however, the conception of a savage tribe as a separate nation had been slowly giving place to the idea that the Indians were definitely under the control of the United States; and on the very day before his inauguration a Federal statute began to operate, which asserted full jurisdiction over Indians upon reservations, thus justifying in a measure the Indian's definition of Heaven as "the place where white men lie no more."

In his inaugural address President Cleveland clearly stated his views regarding the use to be made of that full jurisdiction. "The conscience of the people," he declared, "demands that the Indians . . . shall be fairly and honestly treated, as wards of the Government." Such an opinion from such an executive could only be interpreted as meaning that the President was determined to secure for the Indian the rights to which he was entitled under treaty stipulations.

Among such rights was that of occupying reservations free from the presence of white invaders. That this would not be easily obtained for them Mr. Cleveland knew. The question had always been a complicated



one, and it had been recently rendered still more difficult by an act of President Arthur who, five days before surrendering the executive office, had issued an order that on the first of the following May the Winnebago and Crow Creek lands should be opened for settlement. Thus were those Indians robbed of 500,000 acres granted to them by treaty with the United States.

Without waiting for the designated day to arrive, a rush for the new lands had begun. By March 5, 1885, it was said that two thousand persons were already making their homes in the to-be-opened reservations, that one quarter of the claims had been taken, and that houses were going up by the hundreds. Other and more prudent settlers waited on the border-land. The Payne Colony rendezvoused at Arkansas City, preparing to move at the appointed time. Of its 10,000 members, twenty-five hundred expected to be ready with arms and provisions to descend upon the promised land by May first. Another strong organization waited at Coffeyville; still another at Kansas City.

The Indian agent at Crow Creek, Major Gassman, sent his Indian police on the rounds to warn such settlers as had already arrived that, as the reservation was not yet open for settlement, all persons found on the lands were trespassers, legally bound to withdraw and remove their property. The highest excitement immediately prevailed, the whites declaring that if the Indians molested their property they would defend it. Sixteen companies of cavalry and two of infantry, under the command of General Hatch, were next stationed on the border of the territory, with orders to prevent the entry of all not legally entitled to admission. They were instructed not to let the "boomers" in under any circum-

stances, and to use force, if necessary, to carry out their orders.

The new President saw his duty clearly. He had taken an oath which required him to see justice done, without fear or favor, to white men, black men, red, brown, and yellow. The opening of these reservations to white settlers appeared to him the very essence of injustice, in view of the history of the Indian titles. A careful study of the records, and frequent consultations with his Attorney-General, had furthermore convinced him that Arthur's action was *ultra vires*, setting aside treaty rights by mere executive proclamation. Accordingly, nine days after his inauguration, he issued the following proclamation: "Whereas, it is alleged that certain individuals, associations of persons, and corporations are in the unauthorized possession of portions of the territory . . . recognized by treaties and laws of the United States, and by the executive authority thereof as Indian lands; now, therefore, for the purpose of protecting the public interests, as well as the interests of the Indian nations and tribes . . . I, Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, do hereby warn all and every person or persons now in occupation of such lands, and all such person or persons as are intending, preparing, or threatening to enter . . . that they will neither be permitted to enter . . . nor, if already there, to remain."

This proclamation was hailed as an indication that, with the coming of Grover Cleveland, a new leaf was to be turned in the history of "a century of dishonor," as Helen Hunt Jackson had named our dealings with the Indians. Mrs. Jackson herself, then in her last illness, wrote to the President: "From my deathbed I send you messages of my heartfelt thanks for what you have already done for the Indians. I am dying happier for



the belief that I have that it is your hand that is destined to strike the first steady blow toward lifting the burden of infamy from our country and righting the wrongs of the Indian race."

Within a month conditions developed which served to test the President's sincerity. The operations of the "cattle kings," men who had leased Indian lands at nominal prices and established upon them herds of cattle, were causing serious outbreaks and disorders. The savages were slaughtering cattle and terrorizing ranchmen, whom they charged with fraud and extortion. The invaders were pleading the existence of their Indian contracts and demanding protection, although conscious that these contracts, even had they been legal from the point of view of the United States, could have little meaning in the eyes of Indians, most of whom had no understanding of individual land tenure.

Determined to have the facts in hand before deciding upon any course of action, President Cleveland sent General Sheridan to Indian Territory to diagnose the case and suggest a remedy. The General reported that the cause of the disorder was the grass leases, by which the ranchmen agreed to pay a certain sum a year per acre for the privilege of grazing their cattle on the land set apart by the government for the Indians. These leases had been made without the consent of the government, in spite of the fact that the contract between the latter and the Indians stated that any lease which the Indians might make would not be legal without such consent. In this way, four million acres of grazing land, or about nine-tenths of the land of Indian Territory, was leased at from one to two cents a year per acre. Upon this land were fed hundreds of thousands of head of cattle. The cattle owners paid no taxes of any kind, and maintained



no roads. Moreover, the Indians were liable to the ranchmen for the loss or injury of cattle, and the value of such loss was deducted from the rentals. Thus white cupidity and Indian ignorance were parties to contracts which the latter were in no position to understand, and by which their just and lawful rights were taken from them.

Such, in essence, was General Sheridan's report, and in the light of it President Cleveland, on April 17, 1885, issued a second proclamation which formally declared that President Arthur's order opening these lands was inoperative and void, and again warned all persons who had entered, or were preparing to enter, that they would not be allowed to remain. To such as under cover of Arthur's executive order were already within the Indian reserves, the proclamation gave sixty days in which to vacate, adding significantly: "All the power of the Government will be employed to carry into proper execution the treaties and laws."

This was a strong position, reversing as it did the deliberate action of his presidential predecessor, but one which appealed to such Americans as were interested in seeing justice done. The Mohonk Conference of friends of the Indian expressed their conviction that the President was "entitled to the thanks of the nation for his prompt, firm and energetic action"; and one of its speakers alluded to "the awakened conscience of the American people expressed in the executive will of President Cleveland."

The cattle men, however, believing the proclamation to be a mere play to political galleries, proceeded to bring pressure. Accompanied by a United States Senator, a Congressman and the editor of a leading Democratic newspaper, their committee proceeded to

Washington, confident that a President with a second term unwon would not dare to stand against them and their great interests, for the sake of a few thousand politically impotent Indians. And so they went up to the capital city as gaily as though assured in advance of a favorable reception, and an order suspending the removal of their cattle until an entirely convenient season.

Arrived at Washington, they were courteously received by the President, and encouraged to plead their case. This they did, fully and at leisure. They told him of the magnitude of their interests and the extent of their influence. They descanted upon the tremendous hardship it would be to them were they obliged to leave the territory upon which they had entered.

Mr. Cleveland listened patiently and then replied—and in replying he was at his best. He knew well how to break down the barriers of sophistries that a ring erects, for he had been a ring fighter all his life. He told them that they had talked much about their interest, and nothing about that of the public. The public interest was what he represented, and would represent. They had enlarged much on hardships which were of their own making, and not at all upon rights that had been violated. Bad faith had been at the bottom of this and most other Indian troubles. Public peace and public honor had been sacrificed to enrich the trespassers and impoverish the Indians. Of the sixty days given them in which to leave, they had sacrificed twelve in an endeavor to get him to back down. They had made no effort to obey the law. They must leave, and had best begin to go at once. The command to remove their cattle would not be withdrawn. The policy would not be changed. The time would not be extended, except in specific cases where it had been proven that every endeavor had been



made to go within the allotted time, and then only for the purpose of insuring the removal, not for the purpose of postponing or preventing it.

At this new proof of his determination to see justice done, a volume of letters poured in upon him, some containing expert approval of his position, from men familiar with the situation at first hand; some voicing pleas, more ardent than intelligent, for even greater severity. Mediums, claiming to be controlled by "Tecumseh," "Miantinoma," or "Black Eagle," plied him with pages of advice upon Indian policy. Enticing pictures were drawn for him of the spirit land where the departed braves and heroic chieftains "speak and travel and do good to the whites."

One enthusiastic spiritualist from New York wrote: "You would not scorn to see those Indians on the other side, as I so often see them. They are among our most talented and beautiful spirits—violent and fawn." Bushyhead, "Principal Chief" of the Cherokee nation, submitted a brief of nine typewritten sheets, most unchieftain-like in character, being full of citations from Supreme Court decisions and excerpts from congressional statutes. And the Woman's National Indian Association of western Pennsylvania described his proclamations as marking the dawn of a new Indian policy. It was a weary burden, when added to his myriad other responsibilities, to weigh, study and decide the questions presented; and Mr. Cleveland doubtless echoed the sentiment of a correspondent who remarked that the President must regret that "any cattle came out of the ark."

The most constructive of these communications, however, while approving the President's brave insistence upon the enforcement of law, and his demand for cor-



rections in the interest of even-handed justice, questioned the Government's entire policy of segregation. They argued that every reservation blocked the way to enterprise, and that what was needed was a new policy calculated to absorb the Indians into the civilized life so resistlessly pressing their reservations on all sides.

The conditions which in the past had made the reservation system measurably effective in guarding Indian lands from white encroachments had passed forever. Large and populous states had developed, side by side with the reserved areas; and the tendency to invasion of the unused lands was irresistible. "It is no longer possible," wrote an Indian commissioner, "for the United States to keep its citizens out of these territories. It has been demonstrated that isolation is an impossibility, and that if possible it could never result in the elevation or civilization of the Indian."

These views, repeated in many reports and letters laid before the President, were reinforced, late in the autumn of the same year, by a delegation from the Mohonk Conference, which visited him at Washington. After hearing their arguments, the President declared himself in accord with their general position. "Ultimately," he said, "lands must be given in severalty and the Indians thrown upon their own resources, but the question is meantime how best to prepare them for independence. . . . I should desire to do much and to place it among the achievements of my administration, yet probably I can only make a beginning. But I want that to be right, and I want to know what is the most useful thing that now can be done." Upon that matter the delegation was a unit. They desired a general law which would empower the President to grant lands in severalty to such

Indians as he thought ready, at the same time giving them American citizenship.

Before Mr. Cleveland, following his habitually deliberate course, had fully decided what he should do by way of carrying this suggestion into effect, reports of Indian agents intimated that certain tribes were disposed to press by war for rights which he was planning to secure for them by the surer methods of peace. The agent at Santa Fé predicted, "An Indian war is as sure to come next spring as that the sun will shine to-morrow," not a very convincing analogy for some sections of the country, but fairly conclusive when spoken in New Mexico.

In order, if possible, to prevent such an outbreak, President Cleveland prepared the following instructions for General Sheridan:

LT. GENERAL P. H. SHERIDAN.

Dear Sir:

In view of the possible disturbances that may occur among the Indians now in the Indian Territory, and the contemplated concentration of troops in that locality, I deem it desirable that you proceed at once to the location where trouble is to be apprehended and advise with and direct those in command, as to the steps to be taken to prevent disorder and depredation by the Indians and as to the disposition of the troops.

Your acquaintance with the history and the habits and customs of the Indians leads me also to request that you invite a statement on their part, as to any real or fancied injury or injustice towards them, or any other causes that may have led to discontent, and to inform yourself generally as to their condition.

You are justified in assuring them that any cause of



complaint will be fully examined by the authorities here, and if wrongs exist they shall be remedied.

I think I hardly need add that they must be fully assured of the determination on the part of the government to enforce their peaceful conduct, and by all the power it has at hand, to prevent and punish acts of lawlessness and any outrages upon our settlers.

Yours truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Already, however, acts of lawlessness had been committed, and were being increasingly multiplied by the Apaches, who for three hundred years had been a scourge to northern Mexico, Arizona, and New Mexico. In May, they had begun to leave their reservation in small bands and, breaking over the borders, were leaving a trail of murder, arson, and pillage behind them.

General Crook had at once opened pursuit upon what he termed these "tigers of the human race," and the local authorities had vigorously seconded him, adopting methods so ferocious as to cause Mark Twain to send the following protest to the President: "You not only have the power to destroy scoundrelism of many kinds in this country, but you have amply proved that you have also the unwavering disposition and purpose to do it." As convincing proof that scoundrelism existed among the chosen guardians of Indian lands, he enclosed the following official notice from the *Southwest Sentinel* of Silver City, New Mexico:

\$250 Reward

The above reward will be paid by the Board of County Commissioners of Grant County to any citizen of said county for each and every hostile renegade



Apache killed by such citizen, on presentation to said board of the scalp of such Indian.

By order of the Board, E. Stine, Clerk.

Mark Twain's appeal, however, fell upon deaf ears. Sensitive as he was to the cry of injustice and inhumanity, Mr. Cleveland was equally conscious of the demands of law and order. His was not the type of character to spin theories of justice while neglecting to provide that indispensable prerequisite to justice, the protection of life and property. The Indians had appealed to the sword. To this, as he saw it, but one reply was possible: "Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword." He therefore made no effort to stay "the hand that smites."

On April 20, 1886, General Miles, who had succeeded Crook in the command of the border, issued his field order No. 7, and the last of the Indian wars was begun. Thereafter, for months, Captain Henry W. Lawton and his fighting doctor comrade, Captain Leonard Wood, scoured the borders and the recesses of upper Mexico in search of Geronimo and his Apache followers. On July 13th, the camp of Geronimo was surprised, and the capture of the rebel Apaches soon followed.

When the round-up came, the vanquished warriors, with all their tribe, were transported first to Florida and later to Mt. Vernon Barracks, Alabama, where, though well cared for, they were prisoners at large, held in restraint in defense of the rights of the majority, which they had violated. The result of this removal was to give peace and safety to New Mexico, Arizona and the whole Mexican border. War had been used to prevent a greater war.

Despite this, and one or two similar instances of stern measures in defense of law and order, the general policy

of Mr. Cleveland's administration was one of peace. The Commissioner for Indian Affairs, at the end of the year 1886, reported that the "practical trial of this humanitarian and peace system only adds cumulative testimony to the superiority of its methods of Indian civilization over any others ever yet tried."

In September, 1886, Senator Dawes of Massachusetts prepared a general act embodying the fundamental ideas which the Mohonk Conference had elaborated, and which President Cleveland had approved in substance in the autumn of 1885. Having received the approval of both houses of Congress, it was signed by the President on February 8, 1886.

This law, which has been called the Indian Emancipation Act, made possible the disestablishment of the reservation system, and the transforming of the Indians from wards of the government into men in a world of men. It dealt chiefly with two questions: the Americanization of the Indian, and the allotment to individual Indians of lands hitherto held as the property of tribes. It authorized, but did not require, the President to allot the lands in fixed quantities to such Indians as made application according to a prescribed form, providing, however, that if at the end of four years there should be any Indians who had not accepted allotments, the Secretary of the Interior should arrange for someone to act for them. In all cases the land taken was made inalienable for twenty-five years. It was evident that in most reservations, after each Indian, man, woman and child, had received a designated share, amounting to from forty to three hundred and twenty acres each, there would be left much land to be accounted for. This the President was authorized to purchase from the Indians, depositing the purchase money in the United States treasury, to be



used for the education and civilization of the Indians on the reservation concerned.

The other chief item of the bill gave the right of citizenship to such Indians as had already left their tribes and adopted "the habits of civilized life," truly a vague and difficult term, for the habits of civilized life are varied and hard to define. The right of citizenship was also conferred upon every Indian who received land, under this or any other law or treaty. Citizens thus made ceased automatically to be wards of the government, and became, as other citizens, amenable to the jurisdiction of the state or territory in which they should reside.

"The law," declared Senator Dawes, with a just pride of achievement, "confers upon every Indian in this land a homestead of his own; and, if he will take it, it makes him a citizen of the United States, with all the privileges and immunities and rights of such a citizen, and opens to him the doors of all courts in the land upon the same terms that it opens them to every other citizen. . . . Two hundred thousand Indians have been led out, as it were, to a new life, to a new pathway." A pathway, he added, with a caution which the circumstances fully warranted, "which is to them all a mystery; they do not know whither it leads or how to travel it. In the darkness they are groping about, and they are wandering away. They do not embrace this new life as by magic, and come out citizens of the United States."

This was perfectly true. The law had enacted an opportunity and nothing more. It made it possible, furthermore, for an unwise President to push forward the process too rapidly, thus aggravating, rather than relieving, the ills of the Indian.

Mr. Cleveland, fully realizing the vital importance of caution, told Senator Dawes, when signing the bill,



that he did not intend to apply it to more than one reservation at first, for he knew, as the Senator quaintly phrased it, that the "hunger and thirst of the white man for the Indian's land is almost equal to his hunger and thirst after righteousness." The President added the assurance that, in selecting agents to carry out the processes of the bill, he would consult the friends of the Indians, knowing full well that a commissioner working in the interest of those desiring to secure the best lands could easily put the Indians upon the most inhospitable and unproductive sections, and sell the good sections to white men. In this cautious spirit, conscious of the pitfalls which yawned to punish precipitation or mistake, Mr. Cleveland studied the Indian question with astonishing care and patience, gave frequent audiences to committees, teachers, and missionaries, and, by autumn, had designated twenty-seven reservations as fields for experimentation in land allotments.

From the first, although a few tribes were favorable to the change, the greater number resented the appearance of allotment agents, even as the Englishmen of early days had resented the king's demand that they send representatives to consult with him regarding the making of laws. As the agents entered a reservation they were likely to see a cloud of dust in the distance, marking the course of the warriors taking to the woods, in order to avoid the hated process of being given a plot of ground with its attendant evil of American citizenship.

In both cases reluctance registered the conviction that what was planned was of sinister import. The Indians no more understood what private ownership of land might mean to them than did the early English understand what the representative idea, if accepted, would mean to them. To the Indian the allotment was danger to the ancient

tribal system, and to the early English subject the summons to elect representatives meant only a new tax. But despite these difficulties, the work of allotment progressed, slowly but steadily.

The pressure of expanding white population, on the other hand, advanced with great rapidity, making the opening of new lands imperative. A few weeks after Mr. Cleveland left the White House, in 1889, the extent of this pressure was graphically illustrated by the opening of Oklahoma to white invasion, despite the fact that the Seminole Indians had sold it to the American nation with the express understanding that no white settlers were to be allowed to acquire lands therein. It was the old story repeated.

Most of the good farming and grazing country available for homesteads had by that date been assigned, and the news that Oklahoma was to be opened caused a stir among the pioneer element. To avoid the preliminary rush, President Harrison's proclamation contained this paragraph: "Warning is hereby . . . given that no person entering upon and occupying said lands before said hour of 12 o'clock noon of the 22d day of April, A.D. 1889, . . . will ever be permitted to enter any of said lands or acquire any rights thereto."

But even so dire a threat could not prevent premature invasion, and the rich valleys of Oklahoma were alive with eager trespassers days before the signal was given. The greater host, however, encamped on the borders; and at the sound of the bugle they invaded with one mad rush, which between the morning and the evening shadows of that single day settled an empire. Towns which at dawn had been only blue prints, closed the day with the population of small cities. By December the reserved territory boasted 60,000 inhabitants, with schools,



churches, newspapers, and much needed jails. Less than a year later, the same scene was enacted upon the Sioux reservation in South Dakota when its broad acres also were added to those which by presidential proclamation were made available for white settlers.

It was the boast of President Harrison's Secretary of the Interior, John W. Noble, that during a single term he had opened to settlement more Indian reservations than all of his predecessors combined. And before Mr. Cleveland's second election these kaleidoscopic changes had produced, among the five civilized tribes of Indian Territory, conditions which made necessary there also the speedy destruction of the tribal system.

In defiance of American law, but often with the eager connivance of the Indians whose property that law was designed to protect, negroes and white settlers had invaded the territory, until they outnumbered the Indians six to one. Moreover, just beyond their boundaries lay the recently opened regions, full of new settlers, many of them lawless, desperate men, who robbed trains, murdered travelers, and otherwise plied the profession of knights of the road with comparative impunity. When too hard pressed by the officers of the law, these desperadoes "jumped the borders" into one of the five Indian "republics" where, in view of the lack of extradition arrangements with the United States, they remained as free as Robin Hood, and twice as lawless.

Of course, such a situation could not be tolerated. A short time before the inauguration of March 4, 1893, a committee of the Senate declared: "Their system of government cannot be continued. . . . It cannot be reformed; it must be abandoned and a better one substituted." And Mr. Cleveland, as Chief Executive, was expected to point the way.



This was an extremely difficult task, as the five civilized tribes, each with a kind of constitutional government of its own, held themselves sovereign, and desired to remain so, an ambition which Congress had recognized as legitimate by specifically exempting them from the operation of the Dawes bill. Moreover, the desire was not unnatural, in view of the large sums of money which were from time to time distributed among them as the result of land sales.

The day before Mr. Cleveland's second inauguration, Congress provided for the appointment of three commissioners to negotiate with the five tribes for the purpose of extinguishing their tribal titles. Mr. Cleveland selected as this commission Henry L. Dawes, M. H. Kidd, and Archibald S. McKennon, instructing them to act only with the willing approval of the Indians—instructions which seemed to doom the negotiations to certain failure.

The Dawes Commission received scant encouragement among the five civilized tribes. Wisely holding their peace as to the limitation of their power, they conferred with the chiefs and commissioners of each tribe, explaining the President's wish that lands should be allotted in severalty, and tribal governments changed into territorial governments. They could make no progress. A general conference of four of the tribes was then held, the Seminoles taking no part. This conference lasted three days, and conditions had begun to appear favorable for an agreement when information reached the Indians that they were free to act as they pleased, the commission having instructions to do nothing without the consent of the tribes. This knowledge put an effectual check upon the disposition to negotiate, and the only result of the conference was the adoption by the Indians of resolutions strongly condemning any change.

The general conference having failed, the commission returned to the original plan of conferences with the chiefs of each tribe in turn. In private conversations, many of the Creek citizens expressed a disposition to accept the government's proposition; but, after listening to the address of a chief who warned them that they would each receive a lot of land only four by eight feet, the council again decided in the negative.

A year or more of weary wrangling got the commission no nearer their goal, and on November 20, 1894, they reported: The tribes "have demonstrated their incapacity to . . . govern themselves, and no higher duty can rest upon the Government that granted this authority than to revoke it when it has so lamentably failed."

The President's view, however, did not accord with this drastic suggestion. He still believed that, with patience, the Indians could be brought to see their own interests and to negotiate. On May 4, 1895, he wrote to Hoke Smith, Secretary of the Interior:

MY DEAR SIR:

As the commission to negotiate and treat with the five civilized tribes of Indians are about to resume their labors, my interest in the subject they have in charge induces me to write you a few words concerning their work. As I said to the commissioners when they were first appointed, I am especially desirous that there shall be no reason in all time to come to charge the commissioners with any unfair dealing with the Indians, and that whatever the results of their efforts may be the Indians will not be led into any action which they do not thoroughly understand or which is not clearly for their benefit.

At the same time I still believe, as I have always believed, that the best interests of the Indians will be



found in American citizenship, with all the rights and privileges which belong to that condition. The approach of this relation should be carefully made and at every step the good and welfare of the Indian should be constantly kept in view, so that when the end is reached citizenship may be to them a real advantage, instead of an empty name.

I hope the commissioners will inspire such confidence in these Indians with whom they have to deal that they will be listened to, and that the Indians will see the wisdom and advantage of moving in the direction I have indicated. If they are willing to go immediately so far as we may think desirable, whatever steps are taken should be such as to point out the way and the results of which will encourage these people in future progress. A slow movement of that kind fully understood and approved by the Indians is infinitely better than swifter results gained by broken pledges and false promises.

Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

In the end, the facts justified his patience. Early in February, 1897, he received from a commission of Chickasaws and Choctaws an elaborate memorial explaining their refusal to accept his propositions sent through the commission and, while arraigning the United States upon the question of honesty, consenting under certain conditions to the terms proposed.

"We fear," they declared, "that should our two nations *voluntarily convey* the fee-title to our lands to the United States, that, when done, it would be claimed by the railroads . . . and, perhaps in the end [the Indians] lose their homes. For this reason, more than all others, we . . . have refused to sign said agreement. . . . We



are now ready to agree to the allotment of all the public domain belonging to the Choctaw and the Chickasaw people . . . provided the fee-title remain in the respective tribes until the allotments are completed and each allottee placed in peaceable possession of his or her allotment, and all other persons removed therefrom." As a preliminary condition they demanded "payment of the arrears of interest long since due on our trust fund . . . for we know from experience that it usually requires about two generations and a large amount of money, to prosecute to final judgment an Indian claim against the United States."

Less than a month later, Mr. Cleveland left the White House forever, conscious that the Indian problem was in a fair way to solution, and conscious also that the savage wards of the nation had received at his hands that justice which he ever strove to give to rich and poor, powerful and powerless alike, in equal measure. Sixty thousand Indians, not counting those in Indian Territory, had taken lands in severalty, and become American citizens, and the process was still in progress. On February 1, 1898, the Board of Indian Commissioners reported that Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles had signed agreements, and the condition of *imperium in imperio* was at an end.

## CHAPTER X

### CLEVELAND, BISMARCK, AND SAMOA

*"I do not believe that nations any more than individuals can safely violate the rules of honesty and fair dealing."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

FROM the point of view of permanent achievement in the field of foreign affairs, Mr. Cleveland's presidential career is generally labeled "not particularly successful." The Alaskan fisheries produced friction with England, and his treaty designed to remove the cause of the difficulty was rejected by the Senate, which thus forced him to resort to temporary expedients such as never fully satisfied his really constructive mind. Sir Sackville-West, British Minister at Washington, by an indiscreet letter, caused him annoyance, which incident he himself erected into a question of international importance by peremptorily dismissing the offender and inviting insult in return from Downing Street. And even in Samoa, despite his best efforts to preserve Samoan sovereignty, Germany in the end succeeded in her persistent and well-laid plans of conquest.

At first glance, therefore, the sum of his achievements in this field looks strangely like zero. But, if actual accomplishment was small, the influence of his persistent struggle against what he considered German imperialism in Samoa, American imperialism in Hawaii, and British imperialism in Venezuela, was certainly considerable. He dared to stand for the rights of weak and helpless

nations at a time when it was, internationally, the fashion to disregard them, and in so doing committed the nation to a policy as creditable as it was unusual.

The glory of America, in her dealings with helpless nations, in general, has been that we have given rather than taken; and Mr. Cleveland's foreign policy, even in its failures, helped to establish this ideal. It placed America before the world as a nation which would neither practice herself, nor countenance in others, the ancient methods of the international highwayman, however strong his arm, and however determined his purpose.

In writing the sentence, "We have a moral right to expect that no change of native rule shall extinguish the independence of the islands," Secretary Bayard stated for the President, not an abstract ideal, but a concrete program, which Mr. Cleveland insisted upon, not only from other nations but from his own as well; not only with reference to the Samoan Islands, but with reference to Hawaii and Venezuela, for in each instance he believed himself to be the defender of a threatened and impotent sovereignty. His decisions were not always correct, but they were always courageous, always unselfish, always the result of patient study.

"The Athenians know what is right, but the Lacedæmonians practice it," runs a famous Greek sentence; and it may be as truly said that, while many Presidents have talked of self-determination, and of the duty of strong nations to respect and defend the rights of weaker ones, few, if any, have so fearlessly and so persistently practiced these noble conceptions as did Grover Cleveland. To him, therefore, history must give a portion of the credit which has come to America from the international altruism which she has since shown, notably in her



dealings with China, with Cuba, and with the Philippine Islands.

Prior to the Spanish War of 1898, which gave America her first insular possessions, the United States was hardly a world power. Her traditional doctrine of avoiding entangling alliances had kept her apart from most of the great international problems which vex nations that indulge in foreign alliances. For that reason Grover Cleveland's letters, messages, and speeches contain comparatively little regarding foreign affairs. One is constantly struck, upon comparing his papers with those of Theodore Roosevelt, with the astonishingly small place occupied by questions of foreign policy. Mr. Cleveland discussed foreign affairs very little, not because he was provincial-minded, but because he was the head of an isolated republic. Theodore Roosevelt discussed foreign affairs almost incessantly, not because he was world-minded (though he happened to be), but because he had inherited the world problems which had become America's problems in the epochal era of William McKinley, George Dewey, John Hay, and Elihu Root.

The rise of American interests in Samoa had been very gradual. In early days adventurous merchants from the west had entered the islands in pursuit of a trade which at first was casual. But in 1872 a guileless Samoan chief, guileless because ignorant of the Frankenstein image which he was invoking, granted to United States merchants the permanent right to use the harbor of Pago-Pago in the island of Tutuila. There followed promptly and properly the demand for laws that would secure life and property, and in 1875, after a conference in which an American adventurer, A. B. Steinberger, the foreign consuls, and the missionaries joined, Samoa adopted her first constitution. In certain respects it was

an imitation of the Constitution of the United States; but it gave the Samoans only the semblance of representative government, since under it the premier was practically supreme, and Steinberger was premier. From the point of view of Steinberger, this was doubtless an admirable arrangement, and it was certainly of advantage to American traders. But it seemed to lead in the direction of ultimate annexation to the United States, and there were those present who were disposed to regard such an outcome as undesirable.

To Samoa had come other merchants and adventurers, from Germany, from Great Britain, and from other Western nations, holding out the hand, but demanding rather than asking similar concessions. These, too, were granted, and with the new babel of voices there entered the islands those twin brethren who sail upon every trading vessel, be it Occidental or Oriental, white owned, black owned, brown, or yellow—jealousy and deceit. By degrees, therefore, there arose a complication of treaty agreements, not alone with Samoa, but among the nations which had developed trade relations with her. England had her agreements with Samoa, Germany had hers; but each had also agreements, bargains, understandings, with the other and with America, and each had her secret plans and ambitions, not too much centered upon the welfare of Samoa and her only partly civilized people. An American special agent, later sent to Samoa by President Cleveland, registered the opinion that the missionaries are “the only class who are in Samoa for the benefit of the natives, and who . . . have no interests of their own to serve.”

By 1878 British, German, and American rivalries had become so intense as to threaten open conflict. By virtue of a treaty which Secretary of State Evarts signed with



Samoa during the summer of that year, America obtained one advantage. The treaty opened to American commerce, without import or export duty, not alone Pago-Pago, but other ports of the Samoan Islands, and established a guarded extritoriality, by the provision that Americans should be judged "according to the laws of their country," and Samoans, "pursuant to Samoan laws."

Of course existing jealousies were increased by the negotiation of such a treaty; but in 1879 they were soothed to rest by an agreement between England, Germany, and the United States, that no one of them would attempt to appropriate the islands. They also signed, on September 2nd, a "municipality convention" establishing a sort of composite government for the town and adjacent territory of Apia, the port and commercial center of Samoa. Delegates of the native government here united with the consuls of the interested foreign governments to preserve order, protect property, and make life secure. As a matter of courtesy, rather than as an acknowledgment of actual power, the native flag was suffered to float over Apia and the Samoan government buildings. Outside the area of this municipality convention there remained the ordinary Polynesian system of government—assembled chiefs, led by a head chief called by the ambitious title, "King of Samoa."

Five years later a new convention was signed between Samoa and Germany. This treaty seriously menaced Samoan independence, and that it was accepted by the Samoan king, Malietoa, without a knowledge of its provisions and under duress, was made abundantly clear by a passionate letter of protest written by him to the German Emperor a few weeks after its publication:

"I humble myself and beg and entreat Your Majesty to listen to my complaint. The first thing concerning



which I wish to make known my complaint to Your Majesty is this: the agreement made on the 10th November between the Government of Germany and the Government of Samoa. The means by which that agreement was procured were unjust, for we did not want it and we were not permitted to deliberate and consider well concerning it. I wrote to the German Consul to give me a copy of that agreement in order that we might understand clearly the words in the agreement. But he was unwilling . . . unless we should first accept it, after which he would deliver up a copy to me and to my Government. But the reason for my accepting it and for writing our names . . . was on account of our fear through our being continually threatened."

From this time on, Germany secretly encouraged a Samoan faction attached to a chief, Tamasese, in their rebellion against King Malietoa, hoping thereby to bring in "the day" when Germany could declare herself master of Apia. On January 23, 1885, "the day" arrived. Upon the pretext that the Samoans had failed to carry out treaty engagements, the German Consul General seized Apia and the peninsula of Mulinuu, upon which the Samoan government was established, and raised over the internationalized district the imperial flag of Germany. Such was the situation when President Cleveland entered upon his duties as Chief Executive of the United States.

For more than a year King Malietoa failed to discover any method by which to recover his lost rights. At last, however, he bethought himself of the American treaty, which appeared to him to contain a promise of protection applicable to his existing distresses. He accordingly dispatched to the American consul, Greenebaum, the following appeal:

Apia, *May 10, 1886.*

SIR: In conformity with the treaty between this Government and the United States, dated January 17, 1878, Article V, I hereby ask that my flag be hoisted under the protection of the United States, until existing difficulties are settled.

SULU,  
Secretary of State.

MALIETOA,  
King of Samoa.

Article V, to which appeal was thus made, declares: "If, unhappily, any differences should have arisen, or shall hereafter arise, between the Samoan Government and any other Government in amity with the United States, the Government of the latter will employ its good offices for the purpose of adjusting those differences upon a satisfactory and solid foundation." There was nothing in this or in any other article of the treaty which required such action as Consul Greenebaum instantly set on foot. Without the knowledge or authority of the President, he extended to Malietoa and his domain the formal protection of the United States. The German Consul General at once gave "notice to all men" that "it is quite impossible that protection can be extended over the government of Samoa by the American Consul before such instructions have been received from his own government," and warned the Samoans to place no trust in such promises. The representatives of Great Britain quite properly sustained this contention.

Thus was created a situation demanding very definite and constructive action on the part of the Administration. Merely to repudiate Greenebaum's act would be of little value, for the problems arising from Germany's acts would still remain. Accordingly, Secretary Bayard invited Great Britain and Germany to join with the



United States in a conference designed to select "a competent and acceptable Chief" to rule as King of Samoa under the joint protectorate of the three powers, each of which should bind itself neither to annex Samoa nor to establish a separate protectorate over it. Both England and Germany readily consented, the latter suggesting, however, that no date could as yet be fixed as, owing to the lack of telegraphic communication with Samoa, some time must elapse before Germany could communicate with her consul. Opposite these words in the dispatch is written, in Mr. Cleveland's handwriting, this question, denoting suspicion: "Was this a pretext for time?"

But although the plan of tripartite control in Samoa came from Mr. Cleveland and Mr. Bayard, two staunch friends of the ancient American policy of steering clear of permanent foreign alliances, it is clear, from the instructions given to their special agent sent to investigate conditions in July, 1886, that they did not for a moment contemplate a policy which would make permanent any form of foreign control over Samoa. Their aim was to "insure stable government in which native interests shall be under autonomous native control." Germany, however, had other ideas, and slowly her true attitude became evident. She took no steps to relax her hold on Apia, and, while encouraging the idea that every detail for settlement would be left for the tripartite conference, secretly gave ear to her nationals in Samoa who were pleading that the islands be received into the number of the German South Sea colonies.

The months between July, 1886, and February, 1887, were used by the three governments to ascertain the facts, in preparation for the tripartite conference. The German agent reported in favor of a German protectorate,



arguing, by means of statistics, the authenticity of which the British agent flatly contradicted, that conditions made it necessary for Samoa to "be placed in the hands of but one of the treaty powers," and that Germany must be that one. The report of the American special agent, made even clearer Germany's imperialistic plans and purposes, revealing with the aid of numerous documents the long history of her intrigues in Samoa. It also showed how fully Great Britain's special agent, J. B. Thurston, sympathized with the American purpose of avoiding a permanent protectorate and establishing an effective, autonomous native government in Samoa.

In addition, from the American vice-consul at Apia, President Cleveland learned that Germany was steadily fostering rebellion among the natives, and secretly furnishing arms to the rebels, at the very moment when she was solemnly taking counsel with England and America. When this became quite clear, Mr. Bayard sent to the German minister, von Alvensleben, the following letter:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

*March 2, 1887.*

SIR:

It is proper I should acquaint you with the purport of a dispatch just received at this department and dated January 31, 1887, from the American Vice Consul at Apia. It is stated in substance that Mr. Brandeis, lately connected with the German consulate at Apia, has been sent under pay and with the title of general, to give military instruction to Tamasese in promotion of his rebellion against the government at Malietoa. The Vice Consul further states that this action has been made the subject of earnest remonstrance by Malietoa to the Imperial German Government.

I trust that the just and benevolent plan of co-operation by the three powers will not be allowed to be impeded by any such inconsistent and maleficent action as has been so reported, and if any such steps have been taken, that your government will promptly check such action by its officials and under color of their approval.

Accept, Sir, etc.

T. F. BAYARD.

In his reply, dated April 11, 1887, von Alvensleben blandly denied all knowledge of Mr. Brandeis' activities in the interest of Samoan rebels, and disclaimed, on behalf of his government, all responsibility for them.

During the meeting of the tripartite conference which was held at Washington in June and July, 1887, Germany steadily pressed her mandatory scheme, and England suddenly reversed her entire policy by sustaining Germany. Perhaps the item needed to explain this change may be furnished by the following, copied in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of October 23, 1887, from a recent issue of the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

"It has not escaped observers that the Germans support an uncommonly strong fleet in the Australian waters—a fleet which bears no proportion to the interests which they have to protect—and even if one believes that they will not at present attempt to oppose the wishes of England in reference to the scheme of South Sea annexation, nevertheless the fact that they are represented with such a force must occupy the attention not otherwise than very seriously of all interested parties. Taken ship for ship, they surpass the English fleet in these waters, and control a greater number of men. The *Nelson*, our strongest ship, has a speed of about 14 knots, and is partially armored. In the *Bismarck*, *Olga*, *Carola*, and *Sophie*, the



Germans possess a quartette which can reach a speed of 13 to 14 knots, and is armed with modern Krupp's breech-loaders. All the ships of the royal navy which are here, with the exception of the *Rapid* carry old-fashioned muzzle-loaders, and not a single one of them could contend with the Germans under even tolerably equal conditions. Besides the ships already named, the Germans have in these waters also the corvette *Adler*, and the gunboat *Albatross*, so that their force consists of six ships, which carry about 52 guns and 2,000 men."

England knew, therefore, that Bismarck had a thoroughly modern colonial policy, a policy of plunder backed by superior engines of force. And England, while never carrying white feathers in her kit, had been long enough a member of that brotherhood of European powers—robber-barons from the point of view of weak or backward nations—to prefer the peaceful ways of diplomacy to the more costly ways of war. With great difficulty she had adjusted her imperialistic plans to the new ambitions of the Hohenzollerns, and she preferred not to disturb that adjustment, which, only on the sixth day of April, 1886, had been perfected in a formal agreement, whose astonishing terms recall the earlier papal line of demarcation.

Secretary Bayard thus describes this document: It "contemplated the absorption by those two powers of almost all the independent territory in that part of the Pacific Ocean called the West Pacific . . . which had not already been occupied by some foreign power. Through that part of the Pacific a line of division was drawn to mark the respective spheres of British and German influence, and annexation; and each joint declaration agreed not to make any acquisitions of territory, nor to establish protectorates, nor to oppose the operations



of the other, in the sphere of action respectively assigned to it." It is true that under this marvelous declaration of a purpose to monopolize world-wide plunder, Samoa was an exception; but exceptions not infrequently cause more danger than rights falling within the rule.

It is, therefore, by no means remarkable that the ministers of Great Britain, deeply as they sympathized with Mr. Cleveland's idealistic policy of saving for the natives themselves those few bits of territory still unmarked by the world's great plunderers, should have been inclined to humor Germany in her plan for annexing Samoa, provided that result could be accomplished by methods already consecrated by first-class nations intent upon expansion. It is also fair to assume, in view of such facts and of later open German aggressions, that, in agreeing to the tripartite conference, Germany was merely camouflaging her real plans, which were to annex Samoa. This is the more evident when we recall the fact that the tripartite conference opened with the clear understanding that, pending its deliberations, affairs in Samoa should remain in *statu quo*.

As soon as the conference adjourned, the more ruthless side of Germany's plans began to appear. On August 29th, Alvensleben informed Secretary Bayard that the imperial government had found it necessary to declare war upon King Malietoa, and complacently referred to Great Britain's favorable attitude toward Germany's ambition for a protectorate. There can be no doubt that this boast was justified by the facts. Speaking of an interpolation of the ministry on the subject of Samoa, the London *Times* thus reported the spokesman of the ministry: "A word fell from the honorable gentleman as to the presence of Germany in those seas. Our own country has been engaged in the work of colonization. He

did not think we could expect that other nations which had a similar desire for expansion would not also seek to find colonies. . . . He did not think we ought to view with jealousy the advent of the civilized powers to colonies to some extent adjacent to our own. (Cheers.) If we sought to do so we should be pursuing a selfish policy."

An equally frank avowal appears in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of a month earlier: "These little groups of islands cannot . . . remain independent forever, and it is therefore to be urgently wished that Germany should not exhibit too much delicacy with respect to Samoa, but take it while it is to be had. . . . America would have no serious objection to such a course, for her motto is 'Trade, no dominion'; and England would joyfully give her assent, if she were permitted in payment therefor to lay her hands on the Tonga Islands."

But while Great Britain and Germany stood together upon this general platform, Germany's methods soon alienated British sympathy, her war upon King Malietoa being conducted in a manner highly distasteful to Great Britain. "Not only has Tamasese (the rival chief) been installed as king," wrote the American Consul General on September 10, 1887, "but the Germans have driven Malietoa and his government from the capital. On the 19th a German squadron of four ships commanded by Commodore Heusner arrived. On the 23rd a money demand was made upon the king; the same day he replied, asking for time to consult his government and people. Early the next morning war was begun. On the morning of the 25th Tamasese was brought here [to Apia], saluted as king, his flag raised at Mulinuu and over the government house where it now flies. . . . A letter from the German consul now informed me that



his government recognized Tamasese as King of Samoa. Immediately the British pro-consul joined me in a proclamation to the effect that we and our governments continued to recognize Malietoa, and advised Samoans not to fight, but to await quietly the result of the conference."

The natives, however, did fight for a time. They had had the greatest reverence for Germany and the German Emperor, but this same German Emperor had robbed them of their king and of their liberty. His demands had been barefacedly without excuse and no time had been given Malietoa to decide the question.

The first demand had been that Malietoa should pay a large sum as indemnity for alleged insults inflicted upon the German Emperor and his people, prior to the appointment of the commission by the three powers. The second was that he should perform *ifu* to Germany. The act of *ifu* is one whose degradation cannot be surpassed in the Samoan mind. It consists in "approaching the conqueror with the face of the conquered in the dust, and crawling upon the belly upon the ground to the feet of the victor."

In describing the scene W. L. Rees writes: "The 17th of September will long be remembered by the Samoans. On that day Malietoa came down from the hills and sat with his chiefs beneath the telea tree in front of Government House. . . . It was from that tree that the Samoan flag had flown until it was torn down by German officers and seamen . . . there it had again been hoisted beneath the Stars and Stripes when the German fleet had sailed away; there the people had come in long array to pay their tribute; there the king had received . . . the representatives of great nations; and there he now sat upon the grass, surrounded by a crowd of weeping friends, to take a sad farewell before he delivered himself into the hands of his enemies. The Germans did not interrupt



him. Tamasese kept far away. And while he spoke his last words of advice to his loving people, the tears flowed freely from all eyes. . . . At two o'clock the farewell speeches were ended. Malietoa then rose, and, accompanied by his chiefs and a large number of Europeans, went to the German barracks and gave himself up.

"An hour afterwards the German consul came out with Malietoa, and they marched together to the wharf, where a boat waited to take them to the *Bismarck*. As Malietoa proceeded the crowds followed him. Many voices cried out in tones of grief, his friends clung about his person, his servants sought to touch, if possible, his hand. . . . At length the exile disengaged himself from the embraces of his people, and having lifted his hands to bless them, sat down in the boat and was swiftly rowed to the German man-of-war. Next morning he was transferred from the *Bismarck* to the *Adler*. All night the people watched the ships, and in the morning they saw him taken from one vessel to the other, which latter got up steam and left the harbor. Thousands of eyes, blinded with tears, watched the retreating form of the German ship until the last wreath of its smoke sank beneath the horizon. Then they dispersed to their homes. That day and for many days afterwards there was bitter sorrow throughout Samoa."

Malietoa's farewell letter to the British and American consuls is a pathetic arraignment of those nations which had apparently acquiesced in his dethronement: "I was repeatedly told by the representatives of the British and American governments that they would afford me and my government every assistance and protection if I abstained from doing anything that might cause war among the Samoan people. Relying upon these promises, I did not put down the rebellion. Now I find that war has

been made upon me by the Emperor of Germany and Tamasese has been proclaimed King of Samoa." These facts were doubtless in the mind of Mr. Bryce when, during an interpolation of the British ministry on its Samoan policy, he declared that the British Government "had played a sorry part in Samoa."

Meanwhile the Germans were masters, not alone in the regions which had been under native rule, but within the internationalized area of Apia. Early in October, Sewall, our consul, sent the following cryptic cable: "Tamasese German aid usurps municipal government. Americans unprotected." At once the American naval vessel *Adams*, with Commander Kempff in command, was ordered from Hawaii to Apia. She made the journey in fourteen days, and upon her arrival found four German vessels anchored in the harbor. On January 29th, Rear-Admiral Kimberly, commander of the American naval force on the Pacific station, arrived at Apia to relieve the *Adams*, and a few days later informed Secretary Whitney that "King Tamasese is governed by a German named Brandeis, who is sustained by the German men-of-war *Olga* and *Adler*."

Of course such a travesty upon native government created increasing discontent; and Mataafa, King of Atua, who had inherited most of the followers of the exiled king, Malietoa, began to hope for a successful revolution which would make him king, and many of the native chiefs, deserting the government "made in Germany," joined him.

At this point Brandeis, the kingmaker, overplayed his hand, and influential followers of his "king," Tamasese, demanded his dismissal. But Brandeis threatened that with him would go the protecting German vessels,



and with them, peace. Rebellion would at once be upon Tamasese, with no arm to help him.

So Brandeis remained, the German warships remained; but peace did not remain, nor was it intended that it should. On September 15th the American State Department received the following cable: "Apia, Samoa, September 4, 1888. . . . Samoans at war. General revolt against Tamasese. Affairs more serious than ever. BLACKLOCK, Vice-Consul."

The next document in the story is an example of the German policy with which the world has become distressingly familiar in recent years—*Schrecklichkeit*. It is a proclamation, dated September 5, 1888, and declares: "By authority of His Majesty Tamasese, the King of Samoa, I make known unto you all that the German man-of-war is about to go, together with a Samoan fleet, for the purpose of burning Manono, on account of their secret actions. . . . If you do not obey, then all your villages will be burnt down the same as Manono. These instructions were made and set forth in truth. In the sight of God in the Heaven, Chiefs, I am, BRANDEIS, The Chief Leader of the Government."

This brutal announcement was instantly challenged by the American naval commander, R. P. Leary, of the *Adams*. "Being the only other representative of a naval power now present in this harbor," he wrote to Captain Fritze of the *Adler*, "for the sake of humanity I hereby respectfully and solemnly protest, in the name of the United States of America, and of the civilized world in general, against the use of a national war vessel for such services." Captain Fritze's reply has the one merit of frankness, and it shows clearly that he recognized his orders as imperial: "I am neither obliged to interfere with political affairs nor to inquire whether a requisition

from the diplomatic representatives of the German Empire directed to me is lawful or not."

In America, public feeling registered in the form of a congressional appropriation of half a million dollars for the protection of American interests in Samoa; and in Samoa, native sentiment ranged itself upon the side of Mataafa with the result that Tamasese and his German master, Brandeis, soon found their following reduced to four native chiefs, with which sparse backing they were met and defeated by Mataafa on September 27th. At once America announced her intention of recognizing the victor as king by the choice of the Samoan people.

As the months passed, however, it was increasingly evident to the President, now nearing the end of his first term of office, that his fight for Samoan autonomy was still unwon. Germany had evidently not abandoned hope of annexing Samoa, and Mr. Cleveland, still unshaken in his determination to thwart her obvious designs, ordered Admiral Kimberly back to Samoa. This done, he turned to the task of drafting his final message regarding the situation. On January 16, 1889, it was delivered to Congress. It is a brief summary of the history of his efforts to protect American interests and save Samoa from foreign domination. That it does not fully represent his thoughts upon the subject of German aggressions, however, is shown by the manuscript of another message found among his private papers. Had this document been sent at that critical moment, it would doubtless have aroused Germany as his later Venezuela message aroused England:

To The Congress:

I transmit herewith the translation of a dispatch a copy of which was left at the State Department on the



28th of January instant (1889) addressed by Count Bismarck to the German minister at this capital.

This dispatch is sent to Congress as containing an unequivocal statement of the manner in which the recent conflict between the native Samoans and a force from the German vessels stationed in Samoan waters [was carried on] and an authoritative declaration of the attitude of the German Government toward that part of the Samoan natives alleged to be guilty of the attack upon the Germans.

The correctness of the narrative of this affair and the causes leading to it cannot in the light of dispatches received at the State Department be conceded. . . .

The dispatch of Count Bismarck which accompanies this message makes it certain the war will be prosecuted by the great power of Germany against the natives of Samoa who are held responsible upon the facts assumed by the Government of Germany for the attack upon German forces in said dispatch referred to.

It is also entirely apparent that such warfare will be directed against the followers of Mataafa, one of the chiefs now engaged in the civil war at Samoa and that as an incident to such warfare the forces of Tamasese, the chief opposed to Mataafa, will become the allies of Germany.

Nor is there any reason to doubt that if Germany and her allies succeed in destroying or subjugating Mataafa and his adherents, the Government which will be established will be one perhaps native in name, but German to all intents and purposes.

Thus will be accompanied the purpose which Germany, in my opinion, has long had in view, being nothing less or different than the inauguration of a condition of government in the Islands of Samoa entirely in accord

with German interest and standing for German supremacy. This purpose has colored any proposition of adjustment made by Germany and furnishes the key to all her acts.

And still at all times the profession has been made by German representatives that the autonomy and independence of Samoa shall be maintained and our treaty rights respected. . . .

On March 4, 1889, Benjamin Harrison became President, and at once, in response to public demand, laid plans for the strengthening of the navy, conscious that war with Germany was by no means a remote possibility. Meanwhile Admiral Kimberly was on his way to Apia.

"By the second week in March," wrote Robert Louis Stevenson, then living in Samoa, "three American ships were in Apia Bay,—the *Nipsic*, the *Vandalia*, and the *Trenton*, carrying the flag of Rear-Admiral Kimberly; three German,—the *Adler*, the *Eber*, and the *Olga*; and one British,—the *Calliope*, Captain Kane. . . . The army of Mataafa still hung imminent behind the town. The German quarter was still daily garrisoned with fifty sailors from the squadron. What was yet more influential, Germany and the States, at least in Apia Bay, were on the brink of war."

But a hand stronger than the hand of war suddenly intervened. On March 16th, in the midst of this triple preparation, a hurricane of unprecedented fury swept the harbor of Apia, overwhelming the ships at their moorings. Only one vessel, the British steamer *Calliope*, escaped unharmed. And the returning Oriental sun shone upon a peaceful Samoa.

"Thus," concludes Stevenson, . . . "within the duration of a single day, the sword arm of each of the two



angry powers was broken; their formidable ships reduced to junk; their disciplined hundreds to a horde of castaways. . . . The so-called hurricane of March 16th made thus a marking epoch in world-history; directly, and at once, it brought about the Congress and Treaty of Berlin; indirectly, and by a process still continuing, it founded the modern navy of the States."

This Berlin Congress, proposed by Bismarck himself, was merely a reconvening of the old conference. It began its sittings on April 29th, a few weeks after Mr. Cleveland's retirement from the White House. J. A. Kasson, William Walter Phelps, and G. M. Bates represented the United States, and the new Secretary of State, James G. Blaine, a man not to be overawed by "the Iron Chancellor," stood back of them. When they cabled the fact that Bismarck flew into terrible rage whenever they opposed his evident determination to have the conference recognize Germany's domination in Samoa, Blaine sent back the now famous reply: "The extent of the Chancellor's irritability is not the measure of American rights." Thus supported, the American and the British commissioners stood firm in their demand for a triple control instead of a German dominion in Samoa, and on June 14th, the three powers and Samoa entered into a treaty, guaranteeing the autonomy of the islands, restoring the banished Malietoa to his throne, and providing a tripartite protectorate with the powers of the protectors lodged in a chief justice and a president of the municipality of Apia appointed by them.

This was not what Germany desired, nor was it her intention to accept it as the end of her dream of annexation; but Bismarck, for the moment, acquiesced, and with such good grace as to create the impression of a change of heart. He abandoned King Tamasese, with-

drew his German prop, Brandeis, the kingmaker, and returned the dethroned Malietoa, thus fully meeting the more obvious demands of the treaty. The result was to leave Mataafa, whom the Cleveland government had regarded as the choice of the Samoan people, to wander in the shadows, plotting the rebellion which would give Germany her next chance.

From the first the plans so carefully outlined by the three powers at Berlin failed. It was January, 1891, before the chief justice, Conrad Cederkrantz, arrived in Samoa, and it was another four months before the President, Baron Senfft von Pilsach, joined him; but even then nothing happened. "The curtain had risen; there was no play," wrote Stevenson. But there was work. Within a month after the arrival of the Prussian president, ex-King Mataafa altered his course and assumed regal state. The grim trappings of war were seen again in the islands, bearing the inscription "Made in Germany," as intimated by Stevenson. "The voice of the two whites," he wrote, "has ever been for war. They have published at least one incendiary proclamation, they have armed and sent into the field at least one Samoan war-party. . . . Into the question of motive I refuse to enter; but if we come to war in these islands . . . it will be a manufactured war, and one that has been manufactured . . . by two foreigners." Such was the German change of heart, being in reality only a change of method. In the triple alliance she saw a new pathway to German control. Having been thwarted in her attempts to annex by one method, she resorted to another, content to see a German Samoa at the end of a somewhat longer vista.

Membership in the triple alliance, entered by the United States in disregard of the warnings of Grover Cleveland, meant that for the first time since Washington



issued his farewell warning against "entangling alliances," we were involved in just such an alliance. By the irony of fate, it worked well enough to tide over the four years of President Harrison who, on March 4, 1893, returned the executive office to Mr. Cleveland with the Samoan question again demanding attention.

As the restored President looked over the situation, he found that the Germans had not abandoned their plans for the acquisition of Samoa, and that they regarded him with an intense antipathy, as the author of their earlier defeat. He saw also that the triple alliance was a failure, and urged Congress to withdraw "on some reasonable terms not prejudicial to any other existing rights." To the judgment of Congress, however, he appealed in vain. If Congress had any wisdom to spare, it failed to lend it to the Executive in aid of a solution to his perplexing problem. And so the Samoan question rested. The triple protectorate remained an unredeemed failure, Germany, backing now one native aspirant for royal honors, now another, with America and Great Britain always in joint opposition.

By 1900, when Grover Cleveland was again a private citizen, conditions at last brought the day of German success. The Berlin treaty was abrogated, and Great Britain withdrew all claims within the Samoan group in return for German concessions in other parts of the world, while the United States confined her sphere of influence in the islands to Tutuila and the harbor of Pago-Pago, which she had held, to all intents and purposes, in 1872. The remainder of the beautiful Samoan group passed not to the sovereignty of its own people, but to the hands of the Hohenzollerns, the iron masters of the German Empire.

German persistence had won at last, but during the

conflict Grover Cleveland had tied the American people a little more closely to the doctrine of the future—the doctrine that among nations no less than among individuals, the strong have a duty to respect the rights of the weak, and to see that others respect them. “The chief historical significance of the Samoan incident,” writes John Bassett Moore, “lies less in the disposition ultimately made of the islands, than in the assertion by the United States, not merely of a willingness, but even of a right, to take part in determining the fate of a remote and semi-barbarous people.”



## CHAPTER XI

### THROWING AWAY THE PRESIDENCY

*"What is the use of being elected or re-elected unless you stand for something?"*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

POLITICAL prophets, with minds set upon approaching presidential elections, are always deeply interested in congressional elections and in local political sentiment. These are the straws which show the direction of political winds. Early in July, 1886, Texas held her first congressional convention and renominated Crane of the seventh district. Incidentally, the convention resolved: "That we recognize in Grover Cleveland a Democrat and patriot, who, under the heavy cares of his great office, has displayed masterly ability, unimpeachable integrity, and heroic courage; and that we commend the fidelity with which he has fulfilled his pledges to the people in the face of great pressure to violate them."

The Galveston *News*, the leading Democratic paper of the state, stamped this resolution as representative, not of the seventh Texas district alone, not of Texas alone, but of the entire South, declaring that nine Democrats out of ten in that part of the country and exclusive of office-seekers, were perfectly satisfied with Cleveland's administration, and that, if the national convention were held immediately, the South would be solid for his renomination. But the fact that the South stood ready to renominate the only Democrat who had occupied the White

House since the Civil War was, after all, not very significant, especially as great metropolitan journals like the *New York Sun* and the *New York World* longed to see the President's political scalp drying in the sun, before Tammany Hall, or any other long house. Their attacks were incessant and very bitter.

"Not long ago," said *Public Opinion*, on March 5, 1887, "the *New York Sun* advocated the passage of the interstate commerce bill, but no sooner was it passed and approved by the President than that journal found numerous objections to it, and actually condemned the President for not vetoing it. The same paper contained column after column of editorial matter exposing the job known as the dependent pension bill, and called on the President to veto it. The President did veto it, and the *Sun* at once makes the veto an occasion for another stab at its author. The *New York World* took the same position in regard to the pension bill, and called on the President to veto it, but no sooner did he do so than the *World* makes the remarkable discovery that public sentiment is not as it represented it to be, but that among the G. A. R. there is a 'practically unanimous call from New York and other states for Congress to override the veto.' The *Courier-Journal* advocated the civil-service bill, indorsed a plank in the Democratic platform demanding the enforcement of the civil-service system, applauded the President's pledge that he would enforce it, and then turned suddenly to denounce bitterly both the law and the President for respecting it. It is highly complimentary to the President that these ingenious and pestiferous critics can find no other ground to justify their abuse of him than his adherence to his pledges and his enforcement of the law. After all their enterprise and busy zeal, they are left without a pretext for their hostility,



except what is found in the fact that the President has simply done what, at one time or another, they demanded of him. It is the old story over again of the lamb who muddies the water below the wolf, except that the President is somewhat of a wolf himself when he has a mind to be."

But despite such attacks President Cleveland continued to follow his own judgment, demonstrating more and more every day that he was as ready to act without party support as with it, when convinced that his course lay in the line of duty. Such an attitude bred increased resentment on the part of Democratic politicians, although optimistic Democratic sheets labored hard to prove that gossip in the Republican press about differences between the President and the leaders of the party was the sheerest folly.

More and more definitely, as the months passed, was the rift apparent. The Democratic politicians did not like Grover Cleveland: he could not be counted upon to "play the game." If there were dreams of a second term, it was not they who dreamed them, and in their narrow abuse they utterly failed to appreciate the impression which his honesty and fidelity in the discharge of duty had made upon the masses of the people. The Democratic politicians were against the President, but the Democratic people were for him.

"I have seen," declared ex-Senator Thurman of Ohio, "a good many Presidents in my long life. I have known several of them personally, and I have read the history of the administration of them all. I have seen and I know—and I think I know him full well—Grover Cleveland, our President of the United States; and on my honor as a man who is bound to tell you the truth, if ever a man was bound to tell the truth to his fellow-man, I

don't believe that a more honest, braver, truer man ever filled the Presidential chair of the United States." This opinion the people shared.

How much they were for him appeared in his tour of glory of that autumn, his swing round the circle. He visited a dozen or more of the chief cities in the Middle West and South, and everywhere was greeted with the applause of expectant throngs. He won his audiences, not by the discussion of public issues, for he rarely discussed them, but by the personal and friendly manner of his approach to his fellow citizens in each city that he visited. In St. Paul, for example, where Mrs. Cleveland had once been for a short time in school, he wrote into his address this telling paragraph:

"My visit to you being a social one, and trusting that we have a sort of friendly feeling for each other, I want to suggest to you a reason why I am particularly and personally interested in St. Paul and its people. Some years ago, I won't say how many, a young girl dwelt among you and went to school. She has grown up and is my wife. If anyone thinks a President ought not to mention things of this sort in public, I hope he or she does not live in St. Paul, for I don't want to shock anybody when I thank the good people of this city because they neither married nor spoiled my wife; and when I tell them that I had much rather have her than the Presidency."

In October he returned to his executive duties, conscious that in the South and Middle West at least he was a President with prospects. The country was prosperous, and understood how false had been the dire prophecies of those who had hailed the return of Democracy as the beginning of a long calamity.

With a presidential year almost in sight, it was the part of the wise politician to say nothing definite, arouse



no new animosities, and so drift again into power. But Cleveland's masterful conscience was driving him onward toward quite another course. By degrees he had become convinced of the iniquities of the existing tariff laws and of his duty to open an uncompromising attack upon them. This conviction had come slowly, but with a controlling definiteness.

When first chosen President he had considered himself unequipped to form an opinion upon the tariff question. Having had no responsibility for the tariff, save that which falls to the lot of every citizen, he had not felt called upon to study the subject as he always studied every subject which came within the range of his official duty. And being devoid of pretense and of the pride of erudition, he frankly confessed to his friends his need of help, following unconsciously but literally the advice which Charles Dickens once gave a group of students: "Admit ignorance of many things and thus avoid the more terrible alternative of being ignorant of all things."

Carl Schurz has left this account of a conversation which he had with Mr. Cleveland shortly after the latter's first election:

"With characteristic directness [he] asked me what big questions I thought he ought to take up when he got into the White House. I told him I thought he ought to take up the tariff. I shall never forget what then happened. The man bent forward and buried his face in his hands on the table before him. After two or three minutes he straightened up and, with the same directness, said to me: 'I am ashamed to say it, but the truth is I know nothing about the tariff. . . . Will you tell me how to go about it to learn?'

"Of course I said I would. So I gave him a list of books to read. Did he read them? Indeed he did, and

came back for more. Nobody ever worked harder to master a new subject than the determined Cleveland worked to master the tariff."

Realizing the strength of the arguments upon each side of the problem, the President at first halted between two opinions; but by slow degrees he grew to feel that a protective tariff, in the sense in which that term had been interpreted since the Civil War, was iniquitous, involving favoritism for the few at the expense of the many. At times, during the two decades since Lee's surrender, Congress had shown signs of similar views, and had moved in the direction of reducing the war tariffs; but the perseverance of the saints had been denied them, and the tariffs had one by one reappeared. Even when President Arthur's tariff commission, which consisted entirely of protectionists, had drawn up a bill aiming at a twenty per cent reduction, Congress had stilled its conscience, or its political forebodings, by cutting down this reduction to three or four per cent. Thus, despite many professions, the tariffs remained practically undisturbed until President Cleveland's day, not for the sake of revenue, as the treasury surplus was a great embarrassment; not for protection merely, as such rates were far in excess of those required to equalize the difference in wages between the United States and other manufacturing countries, but, as Mr. Cleveland's study convinced him, in order that the manufacturer should enjoy a rich subsidy at the expense of the consumer.

In his first annual message Mr. Cleveland ventured upon the general suggestion that, as the revenues were greatly in excess of the actual needs of an economical administration, they ought to be reduced in such a way as not to injure or destroy "interests which have been encouraged by such laws" and with a view to the protection



of American labor. During the year following he sought the advice of many men learned in tariff history—cabinet members, Congressmen, Senators, and unofficial experts. As a consequence, the tone of his second annual message was more definite and more aggressive regarding the maintenance of war tariffs in time of peace. He pointed out the fact that the income of the government was greatly in excess of public necessities, receipts having increased by about fourteen million dollars, of which almost twelve million came from customs, and declared that “When more of the people’s substance is exacted through the form of taxation than is necessary to meet the just obligations of the Government and the expense of its economical administration . . . such exaction becomes ruthless extortion and a violation of the fundamental principles of a free government.”

It was not tariff to which he objected, but tariff in excess of the needs of the Government. He was no idealist thinking free trade thoughts in a world of nations devoted to protection, but a practical, honest trustee insisting upon administration in the interest of the people. His increasingly bitter denunciations of the robber aspect of the tariff, as then administered, recall the picture of the Moorish pirate, Taric, Tarik, or Tariff, hovering about the entrance of the pillars of Hercules, forcing merchant vessels to share their cargoes with him. Historically, the word tariff means, in the language of frank piracy, the share of imported goods or money equivalent, which a government exacts as the price of admission. To Grover Cleveland, in that autumn of 1887, existing American tariff laws conjured up the vision of the grim Tarik plundering his helpless victims.

As he watched the mounting surplus, bringing with it the inevitable evils of extravagance and inefficiency,

he conceived the idea of bringing the facts to the notice of the public by devoting his entire message to this one topic. This, being an absolutely new departure, would in itself focus the attention of the country and cause comment and discussion of the issue which he was so urgently recommending. The facts, if once understood, would constitute sufficient argument in favor of reform.

The average rate of tariff paid upon imports during the year 1887 had been exceeded only thirteen times in the history of the United States, and the amount so collected during the fiscal year was over fifty-five million dollars above the requirements of current expenses, while the estimated surplus for the succeeding year was vastly larger. Congress had refused to revise the tariff. The President would bring the pressure of public opinion to bear upon Congress.

His political advisers for the most part opposed the plan. To them it seemed sheer political suicide to force such an issue in the face of a presidential campaign. But the outcome of that campaign was to the President a small matter compared with the duty which he saw before him. When one alarmed political prophet warned him that his defeat lurked in a too bold deliverance upon this subject, he replied: "I would stultify myself if I failed to let the message go forward from any fear that it might affect my election." To another he answered: "What is the use of being elected or re-elected, unless you stand for something?" And so, in defiance of warning, and in the face of friendly dissuasion, he prepared the now famous tariff message, which sacrificed his immediate political future, and made of the tariff a living issue.

On December 6, 1887, the message went to Congress, carrying consternation among his followers and jubilation into the camp of the enemy. It was not a radical docu-



ment and not a free-trade document. "Our progress toward a wise conclusion," it declared, "will not be improved by dwelling upon the theories of protection and free trade. This savors too much of bandying epithets. It is a condition which confronts us—not a theory."

With the precise language of a definite mind, he called attention to the fact that "while comparatively few use imported articles, millions . . . purchase and use things of the same kind made in this country, and pay therefor nearly or quite the same enhanced price which the duty adds to the imported articles. Those who buy imports pay the duty charged thereon into the public treasury, but the great majority of our citizens, who buy domestic articles of the same class, pay a sum at least approximately equal to this duty to the home manufacturer."

At once blessings and curses descended upon his head. Henry George sent a cordial letter of congratulation; and the anti-protection journals were ecstatic in praise. The *Nation* pronounced it "the most courageous document that has been sent from the Executive Mansion since the close of the Civil War," laying down "a platform for the next national campaign as clean cut as any high-tariff politician could possibly desire." The *Post* declared: "This message . . . makes the revenue question the paramount and controlling one in American politics." The protectionist journals, on the other hand, were bitter and at times indecently insulting. "Free-trade, cant, and humbug," commented the headlines in the *Chicago Journal*. "Ignoramus, dolt, simpleton, idiot—firebug in public finance," were the epithets employed by the *Commercial Gazette*.

James G. Blaine, then in France, cabled an interview designating the message as "Free trade," and intimating that it was in the interest of Great Britain, which cable

the New York *Tribune* interpreted in the phrase: "Mr. Blaine in Europe speaks as an American. Mr. Cleveland in America speaks as a British manufacturer, anxious to be admitted without any charge to a share of the best and largest market in the world." And some of the London papers, by their enthusiastic praise of the message, made easier the task of those seeking to convict the President of unholy British sympathy. The London *Morning Post* of December 12th, after praising "that remarkable state document," and the wisdom and high courage of the man who had dared to deliver it, ventured upon the prediction that "sooner or later this Congress will recognize the wisdom of the President's advice and resolve to reduce the Federal revenues." But no such flash of wisdom followed. There followed instead cries of indignation from thousands of Irish voters, susceptible to the faintest suspicion of pro-British sympathy on the part of an American public man; and thus the chief aim of the distortion was secured.

In Congress an abortive attempt was made, under the leadership of Roger Q. Mills, to push through a bill providing for a reduction of tariff revenues by about \$53,000,000, with other reductions amounting to a quarter of a million. The measure was conceived in a partisan spirit, and did not fairly represent the reform for which the President had pleaded.

Round this Mills Bill raged the great tariff debate of 1888, Mills and Carlisle crossing swords with McKinley and Reed. The opponents of the President, including ex-Speaker Randall, rang the changes upon Blaine's suggestion that the Democrats were playing into the hands of the British merchant. Reed of Maine interpreted the policy of the administration in the following words: "A nice little dog . . . trotted along happy



as the day, for he had in his mouth a nice shoulder of succulent mutton. By and by he came to a stream bridged by a plank. He trotted along, and, looking over the side of the plank, he saw the markets of the world and dived for them." He emerged, said Mr. Reed, "the most muttonless dog that ever swam ashore." The Democrats, however, had a safe majority in the House, and on July 21st, they passed the Mills Bill, by a vote of 162 to 149, fourteen not voting.

The Republican Senate, under the leadership of Allison and Aldrich, promptly produced a substitute as narrow and partisan as the Mills Bill itself. In the conflict which ensued both bills were blocked, and the tariff question, still unsettled, remained the dominant issue for the elections of 1888. Thus Mr. Cleveland's message forced the two great parties to adopt definite positions upon the tariff, and to those positions they have in general adhered since that day. It also accomplished what Mr. Cleveland's friends had predicted, disaster to all dreams of his re-election in 1888.

Indeed, many Democrats high in party councils, and a few with well-defined ambitions for the succession, hoped that the tariff message had made impossible even the renomination of President Cleveland. Others sought to add to this longed-for disqualification the unquestioned fact that in his letter of acceptance of 1884, he had said: "We recognize in the eligibility of the President for re-election a most serious danger to that calm, deliberate, and intelligent political action which must characterize a government by the people." They believed, or professed to believe, that that statement bound Grover Cleveland to a single term. Such was not, however, a fair interpretation. Mr. Cleveland had merely suggested the idea that Presidents should be rendered ineligible for second terms.

But no such law had been passed, no such action taken, either by Congress or by the people. Had the public responded to his suggestion, it would have found him ready to co-operate. Having failed to do so, it left him free to seek a second term, should he so desire.

Had he followed his own very strong inclination, as repeatedly expressed to his intimate friends, he would have refused a second nomination and spent the remainder of his days as a private citizen, but circumstances rendered such a course difficult. Fellow Democrats assured him that by such a refusal he would endanger party supremacy and party associates who had served loyally under his banner. He also knew that a public statement of an intention to retire at the end of his first term would weaken, if not destroy, his usefulness, and imperil the success of his policies. In this knowledge his political enemies shared, and had even ventured to make such a statement for him, and to sign his name to it. Early in February, 1888, the *Albany Times* had bloomed out with the following specific and singularly clumsy communication, palpably a forgery, which Lamont promptly denounced as such:

Executive Mansion, Washington.

*February 6, 1888.*

MY DEAR FRIEND:

You have been correctly informed as to my fixed purpose to decline a renomination to the Presidency, and I am only awaiting a fitting occasion to make this purpose known to the country without seeming to decline in advance what might never have been tendered me. Perhaps the meeting of the National Democratic Committee here on the 22nd inst. may furnish as good an opportunity as any.



The few friends to whom I have communicated my determination in this matter have without exception, and with great strenuousness, tried to dissuade me from it, and have used the same arguments in substance as those urged in your friendly letter. But, while the arguments are highly flattering to me personally, they are not at all convincing, and I do not feel that I ought to yield to them. There are several reasons entirely conclusive to my mind why I should not permit myself to be a candidate for renomination.

In my letter accepting the nomination nearly four years ago, I took, as you know, strong ground against a second term; I have good and substantial reasons for my position, which are as strong now as they were then. I even went to the extent of advising an amendment to the Constitution prohibiting the election of anyone to the Presidency for a second term. Now, if there is one thing the people specially dislike it is the man, whether physician or politician, who refuses to take the dose that he prescribes for others. "Practice what you preach" is an injunction that all honest men have a right to rigidly impose upon those who assume to advise the people.

Again, you are well aware that the strongest opposition I have had to encounter from my own party during my Administration has arisen from the fact that I insisted upon standing by my pledges and by the platform of the convention that nominated me in their entirety. I refer especially to Civil Service Reform and the distribution of patronage. I am told—and I have no doubt it is true—that most of those who have criticised this feature of my Administration are opposed to my renomination and are doing all they can to thwart it. Now, suppose I were to accept a renomination. Do you not see in what an ex-

tremely selfish and hypocritical light I should be placed before these men and before the world?

"Here is a man," they would say, "who was extremely punctilious and conscientious about breaking any pledges or violating any planks in the platform that were calculated to benefit Democrats and reward the men who worked to elect him, but when it comes to his own personal interest, and he sees a chance to perpetuate himself in office, he has no scruples about breaking any pledges or smashing any plank in the platform, even though it was voluntarily framed by himself and recommended for incorporation into the Constitution."

This kind of criticism, as you must admit, would be unanswerable, as well as just, and I can not consent to stand in such a light as it would place me before my countrymen. But independently of these considerations, is it not true that the one-term principle is the right principle after all? Has it not, in fact, become almost a fixed principle in the Democratic creed? Our party made it a specific and distinctive feature of its platform in 1872. In 1876 Samuel J. Tilden, in his letter accepting the nomination to the Presidency, said: "No reform of the Civil Service in this country will be complete and permanent until its Chief Magistrate is disqualified for re-election."

Not only in its platforms, but in the practice of its candidates, has the Democratic party for half a century adhered to the one-term idea. Since the days of General Jackson no Democratic President has sought a renomination, except his immediate successor, Mr. Van Buren, and he was overwhelmingly defeated. Even Washington, who it is claimed set the example for a second term, was personally in favor of a single term, and had, as he says in his Farewell Address, prepared an address to the people



declining a renomination, but was persuaded to reconsider it solely on account of the then "perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations."

No such exigency in the foreign or domestic affairs of our Government exists at present, or ever has existed since the time of Washington, except, perhaps, on the occasion of Lincoln's renomination. Certainly there is not now, nor is there likely to be in the next four years, any condition of public affairs in this country that can not be fully met and successfully dealt with by scores of Democrats in our party who have had far more experience in public life than myself, and who have also stronger claims on the gratitude of their countrymen.

Finally, I can see no good and substantial reason why I should consent to be a candidate for re-election, while I can see a great many reasons why I should not. My only regret is that I did not announce my determination in respect to a second term in my inaugural address. It would have saved me a great deal of unkind, as well as unfounded, criticism that has been indulged in during the last six months with regard to my alleged objects and intentions. It was only by an oversight that it was omitted from my inaugural, for my purpose in this regard was fixed then as it is now, and has been ever since I wrote my letter of acceptance.

With sincere regard, your friend,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

In the state of New York Mr. Cleveland's prospects were distinctly unfavorable. There his political enemies of Democratic persuasion, including his perennial foes of Tammany Hall, had long since planned his elimination. More than a year earlier George F. Spinney wrote:

"I want to say that there are politicians high in the

Democratic party in this state who actually believe that they can secure a majority of the New York delegation at the next national convention and thus seize a nomination for a gentleman who is without training in national affairs, and, I may truthfully add, does not possess the confidence of that very large portion of our intelligent citizens . . . who are anxious for your reelection and who will heartily support you at the polls if they are not robbed of that opportunity by the intriguers of your own party. Governor Hill has about him, I regret to say, some reckless advisers, men who are tainted with fraud and who scruple at nothing in the game of politics. Unless these men are checked, and that very speedily, they will, in my judgment, succeed in so blocking the way that your own friends within the party must go to the wall; and with their retirement must be abandoned the hope that the management of our national affairs will be continued in honest hands another presidential term.

“It is with many pangs of regret that I here record the prediction that unless judicious action is promptly taken, within six months your enemies will have secured the State Committee and will have so fortified themselves for carrying the state for their own candidate the following year, that it will be impossible for your friends to prevent their carrying out their plans. And when I say your friends, I mean the more decent portion of the Democratic party. True, these intriguers may pull the temple down upon themselves and enrich some western state with a presidential nomination. They may be so shortsighted as not to take that fact into consideration. Even if they did, they are so ambitious and reckless that they will take any chances.

“As I know and as others know, you were already beaten when your friends went quietly to work for you



in the spring of 1884. I need not recall the Herculean labors which they performed. I was an observer and saw much. Others who were participants have told me more. To-day, as matters stand, you are beaten in the State of New York, and no one can more sincerely regret the admission than myself."

For over a year Spinney had shot such letters into Washington, laying bare what he believed to be a plot between Hill, Murphy, and the Blaine men to defeat President Cleveland, while making certain that Hill would be re-elected Governor of New York and made presidential timber by his demonstrated ability to control the Empire State. Being himself a shrewd judge of men, Mr. Cleveland could not have failed to form a fairly accurate conception of the man who had succeeded him as Governor of New York, and who had been later elected to that same high office, chiefly through the support of Democrats with scant sympathy for reform movements in politics.

David B. Hill was a master politician of a none too subtle character, a scientific manipulator of no mean cunning, who had studied for a career in politics as some men study for holy orders. His school had taught him the art of forming alliances, the science of effective combinations. It had not taught him the humanities of politics. He was cold, he was harsh, he was masterful; but he was financially above reproach. He could inspire fear, at times even admiration, but never affection. Thus he was forced to lure rather than to lead, to tempt rather than to inspire. But he was shrewd enough to be liberal in distributing the spoils when the victory was won.

Mr. Cleveland's personal and political relations with him had been cordial, at times almost intimate, despite frequent warnings from friends that the Governor was

planning to supplant him. Not himself eager to stand for a second term, Mr. Cleveland showed little resentment at Hill's apparent attitude. If the Governor had ambitions, Mr. Cleveland saw no reason to resent them; for Hill was clearly entitled to ambitions, even should they rise to the high office which he himself held. "I am quite fully convinced," he wrote to Bissell, "that schemes are on foot for an anti-administration control in New York . . . but you know my feeling well enough to be satisfied that it will not keep me awake at night. I do think, however, that a move ought to be made toward organization for the sake of the best interests of the party—whatever they are."

In the same strain he wrote to his friend James Shanahan:

"I hardly think that you will be surprised to hear that my feelings, tastes, and inclinations are such that if I felt justified in following their lead and doing precisely as I personally desire, I would insist that my public life should end with the fourth of March next; and if any person authorized to speak for our grand party would to-day give me my discharge to take effect on the day I have named, I should be a very happy man. But I am daily and hourly told that the conditions are such that such a course is not open without endangering the supremacy of the party and the good of the country. Occupying the position I do on this subject, having no personal ambition, willing to obey the command of my party and by my own act being in no man's way, I confess I cannot quite keep my temper when I learn of the mean and low attempts that are made by underhand means to endanger the results to which I am devoted. And when I see such good staunch friends as you with their



coats off and sleeves rolled up, I feel like taking a hand with them.

"Much of what you say in your letter corroborates what I have heard before concerning certain parties and influences which you mention. Many friends have been here since the Albany meeting of the committee and I think plans have been pretty well made in different parts of the State. There is no slumbering and if the Albany fiasco did nothing else it roused up a lot of first-rate men and led them to see the danger of inaction. . . . There has been enough of lying since the meeting of the State Committee to damn the world; and it has amused us a good deal here to see certain people protesting either that they had nothing to do with some queer transactions or that they didn't mean anything. Ex-Mayor Grace was here and said to me, 'Don't let them give you any sleeping doses'—and I have not. I think I know a man who will before a great while be asking such men as you for the nomination for Governor and will be protesting that all his manipulation was for the general good and for the purpose of keeping certain discontented persons in line, &c., &c.

"I have written very frankly to you and said more about my feelings and inclinations than I intended; and some of what I have written is, of course, intended for you alone. My position is this: I should personally like better than anything else to be let alone and let out; but although I often get quite discouraged and feel like insisting upon following my inclinations, I shall neither go counter to the wishes of the party I love and which has honored me, nor shall I desert my friends."

Feeling that Governor Hill's growing prospects of renomination were a very serious menace to Mr. Cleveland's own political future, his friends urged the Presi-

dent to use his influence in the gubernatorial contest. But Mr. Cleveland declined absolutely to interfere in the matter. He would not attempt to read his New York enemies out of the party.

But despite this disposition to view with good-humored tolerance movements designed to eliminate him from consideration for a second term, he was determined that his record as President should not be misrepresented at the New York State Convention. Accordingly, just before that body assembled, he wrote the following frank commendation of his own administration, as a guide to those of his friends who should become members of the platform committee:

“The representatives of the Democratic party in the state of New York, assembled for the purpose of selecting delegates . . . direct thoughtful attention to the fact that all the pledges and assurances made at the Democratic Convention of 1884 have been fully kept and realized. The allegiance and adherence of the State Democracy to the principles announced by that Convention and the State Convention of 1887 are hereby again declared, with an explicit approval of the doctrines contained in the last annual message of the President to the Congress that the people should not be unnecessarily taxed under a pretext of Governmental necessity; that in promotion of the public welfare and in the interest of American labor and the healthful condition of our established industries and enterprises, taxation for the mere purpose of unfairly benefiting the few at the expense of the many, is a perversion of governmental power; and that a large surplus in the National Treasury drawn by vicious taxation from the channels of trade is a dangerous and indefensible abuse.

“The Democracy of the State is justly proud of the



fact that one of its members was selected to carry to a successful issue in the last national campaign, the contest for the supremacy of the principles of popular government and for the defeat and destruction of the false theories and corrupt practices which threatened the happiness and welfare of the American people. His wise guidance and administration of public affairs as Chief Executive of the Nation have exhibited to the Democracy of the Land and to all our citizens, the value and the beneficent results of a faithful discharge of public duty. During his incumbency our system of government has been restored to the honest simplicity impressed upon it by its founders; integrity and ability have been substituted for artifice and incapacity in public places; the Civil Service has been purified, elevated and improved; economies have been inaugurated, useless offices have been abolished and business methods have been introduced in the management of governmental affairs; millions of acres of the public domain have been wrested from the grasp of foreign and domestic speculators and returned to settlers seeking homes; the waste and corrupt misuse of funds appropriated for the rebuilding of our navy have been exposed and corrected and the scandals arising therefrom no longer offend the moral sense of the people; thousands of names of deserving veterans have been added to the pension rolls; the rights of every citizen have been maintained at home and abroad; sectional hate has been discouraged and friendly relations among all our people have been promoted.

“In the light of such achievements, in recognition of faithful public service, to the end that reforms already inaugurated may be fully completed, and in strict obedience to the mandate of the Democratic and Independent voters of the State, the delegates selected by this Conven-

tion are instructed to present to the National Democratic Convention the name of Grover Cleveland as their candidate for President of the United States. And said delegates are further instructed to act as a unit in all matters entrusted to their charge, said action to be in accordance with the preference of a majority of said delegates."

From now on, echoes of the old slanders of 1884 began to appear, coupled with new and astonishing ones; and most ingenious devices were resorted to to get them before the public. Mrs. Cleveland herself received the following letter written, apparently in good faith, by one eager to know the truth about these matters of vague rumor:

Worcester, Mass.,  
*May 29/88.*

MRS. CLEVELAND.

Dear Madam:

You will no doubt be surprised to receive this communication, but as it is of interest to yourself only, and not the writer, I know you will pardon the intrusion. To explain. The City in which I at present reside, is in a state of agitation over an item which appeared in one of the daily papers this morning, in regard to the uncongenial state of affairs at the White House. I can't credit such statements as are there made, and feel it to be my duty to give you an opportunity to deny them, which I do by sending the enclosed items, that you may read them as they appear. I myself think this is only a ruse to lead those who favor Mr. Cleveland, to change their views, and I think from what I have heard today that it will not fail in its object unless authoritatively denied. I resided in Wash. up to within a year or two ago and failed to learn what this paper says has been an open secret



for some time. It would gratify me very much to have you answer this, as I wish to convince some friends with whom I conversed today, that the whole thing is a falsehood.

I remain Respec'ly  
MRS. MAGGIE NICODEMUS.

Mrs. Cleveland's reply was immediate and convincing:

Executive Mansion, Washington,  
*June 3, 1888.*

MRS. NICODEMUS:

Dear Madam:

I can only say in answer to your letter that every statement made by the Rev. C. H. Pendleton in the interview which you send me is basely false, and I pity the man of his calling who has been made the tool to give circulation to such wicked and heartless lies. I can wish the women of our Country no greater blessing than that their homes and lives may be as happy, and their husbands may be as kind, attentive, considerate and affectionate as mine.

Very truly,  
FRANCES F. CLEVELAND.

This denial had little effect, for it was not truth that interested the President's persecutors. The tales continued to circulate, advantage being taken of every incident susceptible of misinterpretation. Did Mrs. Cleveland but go for a day or two to New York or Philadelphia, on a visit or to shop, the report flew over the country that she had been obliged to leave the President and would not return. Time and again the lie was circulated that Mr. Cleveland's inhuman treatment had caused her

to leave the White House in the middle of the night and seek shelter at the home of friends.

In vain did Mrs. Folsom, Mrs. Whitney, Mrs. Greely, Miss Willard, and others in a position to know the facts about the President and his wife deny the baseless slanders. The stories grew from bad to worse, were whispered in every ear that would listen, were hawked about hotel corridors and newspaper offices, were written in private letters to individuals, till well-nigh the whole of America had heard them. No effective method could be found either to stop the slanders, or to fix the responsibility upon the authors. With diabolical ingenuity, cruel falsehood was sent abroad through the channels of the innocent. The Baptist ministers, at a conference in Washington, were charged with it before they left for their homes, and spread it in their congregations and through letters to their professional brethren. Children were told of it at the Sunday schools. In one case it was actually carried around from house to house by a female colporteur, who used to weep in telling it. At dinner tables in the cities it was freely repeated, and always on the authority of someone else who was present at some horrid scene.

On June 4, Silas W. Burt wrote to Colonel Lamont of certain "mysterious intimations in the air that an awful scandal about the President would be launched soon after his nomination. I could not learn its purport until Saturday, since which time it has reached me from several sources and my friendship and attachment for the President urges me to write to you about it. It is so absolutely absurd and ridiculous that I could not conceive it possible that it would be uttered, were it not for the campaign libels of '84 and the malignant and vile abuse spewed out by Ingalls. The new lie is that the President gets drunk



and beats his wife so that she makes every pretext to be away from him. In the long list of foul calumnies that have been hatched by partisan rancor in the past I can recall none so utterly base as this. . . . It may be that this lie is to be uttered not openly but whispered about in secret detraction and it has already gained some currency in that way, though in every instance that I have heard of, it has been treated with absolute disbelief and disgust. Is it possible that Ingalls' recent vituperative diatribe sets the keynote of the Republican campaign? If so, it will be certainly disagreeable but will make the failure of that side more overwhelming."

Nor was the scandal confined to newspapers and private individuals. It echoed even in the halls of Congress, often in language most unbecoming a representative of the United States. After a particularly flagrant attack, a reporter said to Mr. Cleveland: "People are sometimes curious to know, Mr. President, how you regard these congressional assaults made on you personally." To which Mr. Cleveland replied: "In regard to personal assaults made upon me by my political opponents, I am free to say I care little for them. I know they are not true, and I believe they are meant to be understood—by myself at least—in a Pickwickian sense. I confess that the speeches of some of the Senators surprise me, for I look upon the Senate of the United States as the most dignified body in the world, and certainly there have been speeches delivered there which do not comport with that dignity. But if they can stand it I can. I am a little amused, though, sometimes that these very Republican Senators who are the most bitter against me have no hesitation in asking very particular favors at my hands."

The Republican press generally denied any part in the wretched business. "The country knows," wrote one

incensed editor, "that the Republican press has not circulated any of these vile stories or discussed the subject." And he added: "Without exception, the stories . . . were originated by Democrats, and further than this, by Democrats whose names are known throughout their party. And further still, the very worst talk of all originated among Democrats who were active and prominent in the headquarters of the National Democratic Committee of New York."

Slander, like the proverbial cat, has nine lives; but slander of the great has ninety times nine. Despite denials, despite disproof, despite the softening touch of time, the poison of those slanders concerning Grover Cleveland's domestic life have outlived the generation which witnessed their unholy birth, in the "earth slime" of filthy politics.

On the fifth day of June, the Democratic National Convention assembled at St. Louis. From the first it was evident that Mr. Cleveland must be the nominee. A repudiation of him would be equivalent to a confession by the Democratic party that their only President since Buchanan had been a failure. The New York delegation, however, appeared far from secure. Murphy was apathetic and one faction, at least, of Governor Hill's followers was using every conceivable means to discredit President Cleveland. For this purpose a scurrilous pamphlet designed to operate in the interest of Governor Hill's presidential ambitions was printed and circulated in the convention. A more disgraceful collection of slanderous vituperation can scarcely be found, among the political pamphlets of our country, from Freneau and Callender down.

"Cleveland, W. R. Grace and W. C. Whitney—A Pair of Thieves—How They Run the Administration and



Knife the Governor of the Empire State," runs the title. Throughout its eighteen almost unbelievably brutal pages one evident purpose runs: to glorify Hill, "our deliberate choice as our Democratic Chief," and the memory of the late John Kelly, "Tammany's greatest head," "whom Grace and Whitney were still hounding in the last hours of his protracted fatal illness"; and to hold up to contemptuously President Grover Cleveland, "the Beast of Buffalo."

But wisely disregarding the slanders of factional opposition, the placard "The Republican prayer—Renominate Cleveland," and other bids for his defeat, the convention accepted the inevitable and nominated Grover Cleveland. So complete was his victory that no ballot was taken, the nomination being made by acclamation and without the appearance of a serious rival.

When Lamont brought the news, he found the President in his library looking over a set of textbooks designed for Indian children on government reservations. Mr. Cleveland glanced at the telegram, and turned again to his textbooks. Apparently the news excited him very little. He had felt certain of the result, and hardly needed to be told what had been formally enacted. Every vital detail of the convention had been carefully planned, and, barring accidents, the outcome had been assured in advance. Even the platform had been drawn by the President more than a week before the assembling of the convention, and his friends had been strong enough to secure its adoption, almost without change.

According to P. J. Smalley, the well-known journalist, Mr. Cleveland connived with Senator Gorman to secure the passage of the tariff plank, whose wording he had made so clear as to constitute a direct refutation of Mr. Blaine's charge that Mr. Cleveland was a disciple of free

trade. When the document was in exactly the form in which he desired it to appear in the platform, Mr. Cleveland summoned Senator Gorman and gave it to him with the request that he see it through. Gorman, without revealing its authorship, showed it to Mr. Randall, who remarked that it suited him but that "the Cleveland crowd would kick." Gorman said he thought he could manage them, and accordingly entered the convention, where the two labored to get it adopted. The resolution endorsing the Mills Bill, however, does not appear in President Cleveland's draft, and the evidence shows that he did not desire to see it included. Indeed, Senator Faulkner is responsible for the statement that the President strongly urged upon Senator Gorman the importance of having no such indorsement.

The excitement of the conflict over, President Cleveland viewed his success with no great personal satisfaction. He was fully conscious that his nomination had not come willingly from the Democratic politicians, but had been wrung from them by a combination of the popular demand, the difficulty of repudiating a leader already entrenched, and the skillful maneuvering of his managers. But he was entitled to a glow of satisfaction at the remarkable enthusiasm with which the convention had done what he had planned, being blissfully unconscious that he had planned it all.

In the Republican convention, which followed on June 19th, the striking feature was the listlessness with which the unexpected was done. Blaine had been confidently regarded as the nominee, but for some reason he insisted upon standing aside. In cable messages from Europe he repeatedly declined to allow his name to be used in connection with the nomination. Despite his expressed wishes, however, on the first ballot he was seventh



in the list of nineteen candidates, John Sherman, Walter Q. Gresham, Chauncey M. Depew, Russell A. Alger, and Benjamin Harrison leading him by large majorities. On the eighth ballot, Harrison, clearly the choice of the convention, was nominated by a rising vote, generously labeled unanimous, and thus Grover Cleveland faced not James G. Blaine, but a new leader, a human iceberg, as his associates called him.

At first glance the chances for a Democratic victory seemed excellent, but the politically weatherwise, even within the Democratic ranks, knew better. Richard Croker expressed the belief that Harrison would be hard to beat, and intimated that, in view of this fact, he would "do absolutely as Washington wants" in the matter of a Democratic nomination for Governor of New York. Upon that subject the President still declined to express his desires. His New York political followers again besieged him to join with them in preventing Hill's nomination. Ex-Mayor Grace threatened that if Hill were made the standard bearer he would bolt the ticket; and he added the opinion that D-Cady Herrick, Frederic R. Coudert, and many other prominent Cleveland Democrats would do the same.

Again, Mr. Cleveland's reply was an unequivocal refusal to have anything to do with the matter. "I am surprised," he wrote, "that you should suppose that I ought to control or dictate the nomination in New York State. . . . I am isolated here, full of public duties and at the same time much perplexed with political questions which are presented to me daily. . . . A crises is upon us involving such immense considerations that they must occur to every thinking man, among which my personal defeat is insignificant. Judgment should rule the hour—carefully made up and uninfluenced by passion or preju-

dice. The exercise of such judgment in the formation of tickets &c &c must be left to those in whose hands party organization has placed it.

"I appreciate fully the very great value you and Mr. Herrick are in the canvass, and cannot but hope that, in view of the great interests at stake, you will be found supporting the result of the judgment of the Democracy of the State even if it should not be in line with your own. In the meantime I am willing to trust it and I must abide by it. I beg you to think of the depressing influence which will result throughout the country from any coolness or defection in the State of New York. Perhaps I need hardly add that I have absolutely and persistently declined to interfere or express an opinion respecting the subject of your letter."

Three days later he wrote to Bissell: "I am determined to let the Gubernatorial question alone, but I am surprised to hear quite a number of people who have been strongly against the Governor say that they think his nomination would be the safest and best one. Indeed I think as at present advised that if it was desired it would be very difficult to change the current in his favor for renomination—some of it arising from personal and political attachment, and some of it from motives of political expediency. There are a good many voters, I am sure, who would rather vote for him than anybody else, and a good many who would not vote for anyone else on our side." Thus, leaving the local organization of New York, as of all the other states, to solve local problems, the President faced his double task of Chief Executive and Presidential Candidate, a combination which told heavily upon his wonderful but much overtaxed constitution. He worked each night until two or three o'clock, and by nine each morning was again at his desk.



His letter of acceptance reasserted the tariff views of his recent message, while scornfully and indignantly repudiating the Republican accusation that he was tilting in the lists as a free trade idealist. In congratulating the President on this letter Governor Hill wrote: "I can give it no greater praise than to say it expresses yourself. . . . It is just what was needed at this time, and its publication could not have been more opportune. Under the inspiration of this letter our state platform will confidently assure our friends throughout the Nation that New York will maintain her honorable place in the line of Democratic states."

So far as Governor Hill's own prospects were concerned, this confident prediction was fully justified; but from the point of view of President Cleveland and the national ticket, the case was quite otherwise. His enemies, especially in New York, were again appealing to the Irish vote on the plea that President Cleveland was a British tool "employed by Ireland's cruel enemy to aid her work of enslavement." To this end his extradition treaty was distorted into a scheme for placing all the machinery of the government in this country at the service of England for the suppression of defection in Ireland. To this end he was depicted as the man who had surrendered "the rights of American fishermen at the bidding of Joseph Chamberlain," as unfair an interpretation of Mr. Cleveland's conduct of the fisheries disputes as hostile ingenuity could have devised. The facts were as follows:

The controversy over the rights of American fishing vessels in Canadian waters and Canadian ports had been waged off and on ever since the foundation of the Government. Disputes had been constant, and in 1886 two American vessels had been seized by Canadians. The

Administration had made vigorous protests, characterizing the course of Canadian officials in terms of severe rebuke, and demanding the fullest redress. Within our borders many were the threats of war with Canada.

Had President Cleveland been less a patriot and statesman and more a demagogue and claptrap partisan, he would have met the issue, as the jingo policy of the period dictated, by an appeal to popular prejudice in the shape of prompt enforcement of non-intercourse and the possible disruption of peaceable relations with England. This would have disturbed commerce and trade; it would have spread distrust throughout the sensitive financial and business circles of the land, and it would have inflicted a large measure of injury upon our own people, but it would have been called good politics. He had, however, preferred to avow his faith in the intelligence and integrity of the American people by presenting the issue to the nation and the world on the highest plane of statesmanship.

He had, therefore, appointed a commission who, with the British commission, had drawn up a treaty which went far beyond any of the four former treaties between the two countries in conceding privileges to our fishing vessels, and was calculated to put an end to disputes and relieve the relations of the United States and Canada from their one source of danger. Regardless of consequences to the relations of the country with a friendly power, or to the vast commercial interests involved in those relations, the Senate, by a strict party vote, had not only rejected the treaty, but by the same party vote had refused to allow it to be amended to meet real or pretended objections. Their criticism was of the kind which, finding fault, proposes no improvement. They had hoped to discredit the President before the country as an Execu-



tive unable to procure the ratification of his treaty, and thus to end his career.

The peaceful method of dealing with the question having failed of support, the President, determined as ever to uphold the honor of the nation and the rights of American citizens, had sent a message asking Congress for power to make a retaliatory war upon the industry of Canada. These were the facts in the case, and this the magnanimous and statesmanlike treatment of the situation which was interpreted to make the President "the confessed ally of England," and by analogy "the enemy of Ireland."

But most iniquitous of all the attempts to make Grover Cleveland appear the tool of Great Britain, was the Sackville-West incident, staged long in advance of the campaign, and with unscrupulous cunning. On September 4, 1888, a letter from Pomona, California, signed Charles F. Murchison, was addressed to the British Minister at Washington, Sir Lionel Sackville-West, asking his opinion as to how a Britisher, loyal, though naturalized an American, ought to vote if desiring to serve England. With almost unbelievable folly, Sir Lionel took the bait, and, over his own signature, wrote to his fancied compatriot that he held a favorable opinion of the friendly disposition of the Democratic party toward England.

Fifteen days before the election, to the consternation of the Cleveland camp, the press published this correspondence, certain papers printing the British Minister's letter with a broad black mourning band around it. There followed a flood of comment regarding the President's duty in the premises. "If this letter is an audacious forgery," said the *New York Sun*, "Lord Sackville should denounce it as such without an hour's delay. If it is genuine, Mr. Bayard should send him his passports be-

fore to-morrow night." This suggestion was laid before Lord Sackville by an enterprising *Tribune* reporter, who asked whether the letter was authentic, and if so whether his Lordship felt apprehensive of recall. Without hesitation the minister replied: "The man wrote me asking my advice . . . as he had a perfect right to do. I answered him giving him my views upon the matter, as I had a right to do. . . . I am not alarmed. . . . There has been so much said about me in the past that I have become indifferent to such comment. . . . I have done nothing that is at all prejudicial to my position or that is in violation of any international custom or courtesy." With this point of view, Secretary Bayard apparently agreed, as, on October 24th, he telegraphed from Georgetown that if the much discussed letter were marked "private" the Government would not be justified in noticing it.

The press, however, far from agreeing, insisted, in varied and picturesque language, that the offending minister must go. "It matters not," said the *New York Times*, "whether Lord Sackville is a fool or a knave; whether he was trapped, as he says, or whether he conspired with the politicians to arouse national prejudice in a presidential contest," he should be dismissed. Mr. Cleveland, no less incensed than were his friends that the representative of a friendly power should give advice as to elections, intimated to Lord Salisbury that Sir Sackville-West should be recalled, and upon receiving no satisfaction, curtly dismissed the offending minister, thereby arousing not only his ire, but that of his government as well. But the mischief had been done.

The autumn elections assured to the President the period of rest for which he had so often longed. Whitney brought the news of defeat. Entering the room where the



President and his young wife were awaiting the final verdict, he remarked: "Well, it's all up." Cleveland had received only 168 electoral votes out of 401, although his popular vote was almost a million larger than that of his successful rival.

On the other hand, Hill was re-elected Governor of New York by a plurality of 19,171, although the Republican candidate for President received, in the same state, a plurality of more than 14,000. This apparently unnatural discrepancy suggested to the minds of many Cleveland men the existence of a combination between Hill and the Republicans with a view to making more certain the elimination of Cleveland and the availability of Hill, in view of a future presidential campaign. Later, however, when heads were cool, they acknowledged the injustice of their inferences.

Writing almost twenty years later, after Hill had retired from public life, and when Mr. Cleveland was nearing his end, St. Clair McKelway, anti-Hill though he had always been, bore public witness to the mature opinion that Hill did not betray Cleveland in 1888. "Something should be said now which could not, for want of knowledge of the inside facts, be said before," he wrote in a Brooklyn *Eagle* editorial, on December 10, 1907. "Governor Hill was true to Mr. Cleveland in 1888. Mr. Cleveland lost this state then because many German Republicans, who voted for General Harrison, also voted for Governor Hill, Democrat, to beat Warner Miller, Republican candidate for Governor, on account of the rigorous excise views which Warner Miller had expressed. The slump from Miller to Hill of German Republicans who were for Harrison, anyway, made the vote for Hill larger than for Cleveland, but Governor Hill, though he benefited by that fact, did not promote it,

and did all he could to get everybody who voted for him to vote for Cleveland also." Doubtless the Germans who voted for Harrison did so with an added relish since it was Grover Cleveland who had resisted Bismarck's design of annexing the Samoan Islands.

To Mr. Cleveland's mind no inferential accusations were necessary to explain his defeat. He had deliberately chosen his battle ground, had followed the dictates of his conscience with the full knowledge of what such a course might mean to his political fortunes, and having been beaten, he spent no time in nursing suspicions. "After all," he remarked to C. S. Cary two days after the election, "I would rather have my name to that tariff measure than be President."

From the moment of defeat he began to rally his followers for another conflict. "Temporary defeat," he wrote to the Massachusetts Tariff Reform Association, on December 24th, "brings no discouragement; it but proves the stubbornness of the forces of combined selfishness, and discloses how the people have been led astray and how great is the necessity of redoubled efforts. . . . In the track of reform are often found the dead hopes of pioneers and the despair of those who fall in the march. But there will be neither despair nor dead hopes in the path of tariff reform, nor shall its pioneers fail to reach the heights. Holding fast to their faith and rejecting every alluring overture and every deceptive compromise which would betray their sacred trust, they themselves shall regain and restore the patrimony of their countrymen, freed from the trespass of grasping encroachment."

To other organizations he sent similar letters, urging above all systematic educational work to make the people understand the tariff issue. "The danger which we have



to guard against," he wrote to the American Tariff Reform League, "is the misleading of our countrymen by specious theories, cunningly contrived, and falsely offering the people relief from personal burdens and the legitimate expenses necessary to secure the benefits of beneficent rule under the sanction of free institutions. The declared purpose of your league will not be attained until all those instructed in the economic question which is now pressed upon their attention are freed from all sophistries and clouding fallacies and until the subject of tariff reform is presented to them as a topic involving the relief of the plain people in their homes from useless and unjust expense."

A few days after this letter was written, William B. Hornblower called at the White House to pay his respects to the defeated President. "I was asked into his private reception room," writes Mr. Hornblower, "and found him sitting at his desk alone. After a few words of greeting, he spoke of his tariff message, which seemed to be on his mind. He said: 'My friends all advised me not to send it in. They told me that it would hurt the party; that without it, I was sure to be re-elected, but that if I sent in that message to Congress, it would in all probability defeat me; that I could wait till after election and then raise the tariff question. I felt, however, that this would not be fair to the country; the situation as it existed was to my mind intolerable and immediate action was necessary. Besides, I did not wish to be re-elected without having the people understand just where I stood on the tariff question and then spring the question on them after my re-election. He paused a moment and then added, as if speaking to himself: 'Perhaps I made a mistake from the party standpoint; but damn it, it was right,'

and he brought his fist down on his desk, 'I have at least that satisfaction.'

" 'Yes,' said I, 'Mr. President, it was right, and I want to say to you, that not only was it right, but that the young men of the country are with you and four years from now, we mean to put you back in the White House.' "



## CHAPTER XII

### RETIRES TO NEW YORK

*"I have just entered the real world, and see in a small child more of value than I have ever called my own."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

THE last months of President Cleveland's first term, like those of every defeated President, were tedious and difficult. The gloom of defeat was upon his followers; his enemies were little disposed to consider a discredited leader, as they chose to designate him; the people, a majority of whom had voted for him, had their faces turned toward the rising sun; and foreign nations approached him convinced that his day of power was forever gone.

England, in particular, resentful of the dismissal of Sir Sackville-West, made no attempt to conceal the fact that she was waiting, none too patiently, for the coming of another President, and was meanwhile content to leave American questions in the hands of a chargé, Michael H. Herbert, Second Secretary of Legation. Under these circumstances the American Minister at London, the Honorable J. E. Phelps, could not but feel the impropriety of his position. Frequent dinners of farewell were given him by well-intending friends who assumed that his stay would of necessity be brief, and that America, too, would place a subordinate in charge of her affairs. At last, on January 7th, he was granted leave of absence, at his own earnest request, and sailed for America, with no intention of returning. Secretary Bayard, while somewhat reluc-

tantly consenting to Mr. Phelps's retirement, declined to accept his interpretation of the British attitude, stoutly insisting that England had meant no slight when failing to fill Sir Sackville's post. "I am most unwilling to believe," he wrote to Endicott, "that Lord Salisbury would sneakingly attempt to inflict a slight and yet seek to conceal from its recipient a knowledge of what was intended. The lion is the king of beasts, but such a course would reduce the British lion to the dimensions of a jackal." Whatever the motive, however, the fact was clear that Sir Sackville was not to be replaced so long as Mr. Cleveland remained in office. Like the rest, the British lion was waiting for the rising sun. In view of such conditions, it is strange that the American people have not long ago insisted upon a change which would release a retiring President and establish his successor within a reasonable time after the results of the election are known.

Upon the purely personal and domestic side, the task of leaving the White House involved the Cleveland family in many peculiar obligations. The household must remain until a definite hour, fixed by a combination of precedent and constitutional enactment, and be then ready to hand over the Executive Mansion to the Harrison family and a host of guests waiting to celebrate a new social era.

Before this hour provision had to be made for the disposition of the extraordinary collection of personal presents which had arrived at the White House during Mr. Cleveland's term of service. Although he had declined all gifts of intrinsic value, and returned many of little account, the attic was nevertheless filled with an odd assortment of strangely varied character. There were photographs by the thousands, including scores of pictures of presidential namesakes, and hundreds of other



baby pictures sent because it was known that Mr. Cleveland loved children. The slaughter of these innocents which the move made necessary was a task in itself.

There were gallons of patent medicines and lotions; luck stones, rabbits' feet and other mascots *en gros*; bed quilts, sofa cushions, table covers, mats, and scarfs. There were boxes of cigars, sent with the best of intentions; baby's first teeth, baby's first shoes; fishing rods, flies, reels, sinkers, hooks and lines—every article ever dreamed of by Sir Izaak Walton or any of his spiritual descendants. There was a veritable arsenal of firearms, with cartridges, hunting belts, stool pigeons, and game baskets. There were manuscripts in prose, verse, and the reverse—of the latter an unbelievable mass; rhymes that could raise the goose-flesh upon the most seasoned editor, in which “the Cæsar of all the world” and “his fair, modern Helen” sported together “on sylvan pleasures bent,” and without the least regard for the rules of the game, either as to meter, rhyme, rhythm, or the sacred rights of chronology. There was “a piece of gold dug up in Michigan,” accompanied by a frank request that, upon receipt of it, the President would wire an offer for the land from which it came. The nugget was dusty with age, but the telegram was still unwritten. There was a rusty horseshoe, marked “please except”; and a shining silver-plated one from a winning foot of the famous racer, Nancy Hanks. There was “a genuine Virginia madstone”; a large tankard of “mad dog medicine” carefully inscribed “a remedy for internal fever, it is Plesen to Drink no bad tast”; and a dozen bottles of tempting “home made liniment.” There was “a Panel painted in oil subject being roses,” with a string attached in the shape of the following suggestion: “You might feel like sending me \$100 and we will be quits.” An admirer in Utah had contributed “a suit of

endowment garments such as are worn by the High Priests of the Mormon Church."

All told there remained, to be disposed of, over three thousand presents, from the good and the great, the less good and the less great, and not a few from the great unknown who loved him and trusted him and who had taken their own peculiar methods of showing it. And in the midst of all these strange symbols of affection, or of ambition for office, standing as a painful reminder of the vanishing qualities of human greatness, was a noble bust of President Garfield done in soap.

At Oak View, the President's private country house outside of Washington, was a different kind of collection. There he had spent his summers since 1886, a couple of weeks only of each having been devoted to fishing and hunting in the Adirondacks; and thither his admirers had sent an odd assortment of living treasures. There were "two baby foxes," now no longer babies. There had been some white rats which had borne fruit after their kind; but one had bitten the finger of the first lady of the land, and all had shared his banishment. A youthful admirer had donated an Angora kitten; but it had long ago disappeared, having fallen over the banisters and broken its leg, thereby necessitating the simultaneous sacrifice of all nine of its lives. There were a dachshund, a French poodle, and a St. Bernard, which had partaken somewhat of the natures of their respective countries—the beagle and the French poodle continually drifting into war, and the neutral St. Bernard invariably intervening. There had come also a fine setter; but he had been returned to the giver with the characteristic explanation that, as a President has little time for hunting, to keep him "would not be fair to the dog."

Upon one occasion a sporting acquaintance sent a flock



of quail; and the President devoted much care to the construction of an elaborate pen for their accommodation, hoping that henceforth he could enjoy the whistle which brought back so many happy memories of dog and gun. By an error of judgment, however, the mesh of the wire selected was too large, and as soon as the birds were placed within, there came a familiar whir of wings, and the presidential carpenter, in speechless wrath, watched his hopes vanish in the distance, to seek for themselves a freer, if a less distinguished habitation.

With the exception of the foxes, such of these treasures as survived to the end of his term were carefully crated and marked "Grover Cleveland, Hotel Victoria, New York City," where Mr. Cleveland had engaged a commodious apartment on the second floor to serve as home until long-coveted leisure should enable him to select a private residence.

On the night before his retirement from the White House Mr. Cleveland heard the surging crowds pass and repass his doors, singing and shouting their comments upon the President who to-morrow would pass into oblivion. Again and again, from thousands of lusty throats, floated the popular refrain: "Grover's in the cold, cold ground." But he was thinking little of his departure. He was thinking rather of the freedom that awaited him. The defeat he refused to consider his defeat. "It is not a personal matter," he told a New York *Herald* reporter. "It is not proper to speak of it either as my victory or as my defeat. It was a contest between two great parties battling for the supremacy of certain well-defined principles. One party has won and the other has lost—that is all there is to it."

Furthermore, he cherished no bitterness toward Governor Hill, no tendency to agree with those who accused

Hill of treachery to the head of his party. When asked by a reporter to what cause he attributed the loss of New York, he replied, with a smile: "It was mainly because the other party had the most votes." But gravely and with evident conviction, he added: "I have not the slightest doubt of Governor Hill's absolute good faith and honesty in the canvass. Nothing has ever occurred to interrupt our kindly relations since we ran on the ticket together as Governor and Lieutenant Governor."

Arrived in New York, Mr. Cleveland resumed the practice of the law, as a member of the distinguished firm, Bangs, Stetson, Tracy, and MacVeagh. Here he again exhibited the indifference to fees which had so often astonished his earlier law partner, Wilson S. Bissell. "I am now closing up a case of Cleveland's which has been running for years," Bissell once wrote to a friend, "during all which time he has paid all disbursements, such as costs of entry, witness fees, etc., out of his own pocket, because the man was too poor to meet these necessary expenses." And he often remarked that the ex-President deserved no praise for incorruptibility in office since money had never had power to tempt him.

This indifference was not due to that "private fortune brought from the White House" of which the newspapers so often spoke; for Mr. Cleveland left the executive office little richer than he had entered it. He had saved a little—the *New York Sun* later kindly fixed the amount at \$25,000 a year—but he had not multiplied these savings, as he might readily have done, by particularly fortunate investments, for he refused to speculate or even to hold stocks concerning which he had any special knowledge, feeling, as he often said, that "a man is apt to know too much in my position that might affect matters in the least speculative."



It is quite possible that he would have fared worse, however, had he been less scrupulous; for he had not the gift of prophecy which makes a successful speculator, and was by no means skillful in questions of stocks and bonds. At times he was singularly childlike in his requests for specific directions as to how to sell certain stocks, frankly pleading lack of understanding of such matters. On one occasion he wrote to Commodore Benedict, his chief adviser in regard to private investments: "If you and I were speculators instead of steady-going investors, I think I would suggest that one of us buy a moderate amount of something, and having thus prepared the way for a decline, that the other sell a large quantity of the same thing short, and divide the profits. It must be that such a scheme would work." But he never bought on margin, always insisting that what was purchased for him should be paid for in full.

His return to the bar, after four years in the White House, was not a mere pretense. Politics had not lifted for him the curse of Cain, and work was not a pastime, but a necessity.

The leisure to which he had looked forward long and eagerly proved far from leisurely. The stern sense of duty which had been so heavy a taskmaster in the White House did not relax its grip, and his life in New York was almost puritanical in its rigid, laborious simplicity. A walk downtown in the early morning was his only regular exercise, almost his only diversion, for he declined to learn golf, studiously avoided dinners—especially such as seemed likely to involve his pet abhorrence, after-dinner speaking—and regarded the theater as an indulgence to be but sparingly enjoyed.

In the autumn of 1889, after his usual fishing trip in the Adirondacks, he established himself at 816 Madison

Avenue, living, like St. Paul, in "his own hired house," as he expressed it. He reveled in his home, the first unofficial one he had ever possessed, played cribbage to his heart's content, and enjoyed his friends as he had never been able to enjoy them. He was enthusiastic about New York as a place of residence, and when he received from Chicago friends an urgent invitation to make his permanent home in that city he replied:

"I beg you to remember that I too have a State and City—great in their progress and achievements—imperial in their standing among American States and Cities, and grand in their history and traditions. I have spent my life since early boyhood in the State of New York. I have stood at the head of her State Government. I am now happy and contented as a resident of the City of New York, and am daily the grateful recipient of the kindness and consideration of her citizens. You have a wonderful City and I am glad that the people of Chicago cannot monopolize the pride, due to every American, arising from her prosperity and growth. But New York State and New York City are very dear to me and I should not know how to entertain the thought of living elsewhere.

"I have made an unnecessarily long response to what was intended as merely a kind expression. I should like to say a word in reply to what you write in regard to the 'favorite son.' I will resist the temptation and only say that whatever the State of New York does will be rightly done. In all circumstances you and I can congratulate ourselves and each other on being residents of the greatest Cities our Country can boast, on being citizens of the grandest land on Earth, and on belonging to a party which seeks to protect the rights and further the prosperity and happiness of the American people."



Satisfied with his life and work, Mr. Cleveland gave no indication of a desire to enter again into the turmoil of politics; although from the first his political followers set themselves the task of keeping him before the country, with a view to a renomination in 1892. "I am," he wrote to L. Clarke Davis, "in a miserable condition—a private citizen without political ambition, trying to do private work, and yet pulled and hauled and importuned daily and hourly to do things in a public and semi-public way which are hard and distasteful to me. I have never made a speech or written a letter except in compliance with importunities which I could not resist from those engaged in some good work, or from those entitled to claim my consideration on party grounds. To refuse, as I am obliged to, the many requests presented to me is as wearing and as perplexing as it was to refuse applications for office at Washington. . . . I often have a pretty blue time of it, and confess to frequent spells of resentment, but I shall get on in a fashion."

When forced to speak, he refused to heed the advice of his political friends constantly urging caution, and fearlessly declared his convictions. While Governor Hill was meditatively balancing the popularity of free silver, Grover Cleveland was alarming his supporters by frankly and unequivocally denouncing it upon every proper occasion. And when warned that the nomination was coming and that Hill had ambitions, he replied: "D—— the nomination. I will say what I think is right."

He made no attempt to defend his stewardship as President; presented no excuses, no apologies, beyond the simple statement: "No man can lay down the trust which he has held in behalf of a generous and confiding people, and feel that at all times he has met in the best possible way the requirements of his trust; but he is not derelict

in duty if he has conscientiously devoted his efforts and his judgments to the people's service." He knew that he had performed his public duties faithfully, uncongenial as many of them had been. He had neither faltered before duty, quailed before threats, nor fallen captive to the enervating whisper, the politician's Lorelei, "This will be popular."

Early in October, 1889, when the Democratic Society of Pennsylvania pleaded with him to address their first general assembly, he declined. His simple letter of regret, however, was used, in lieu of the desired address, to arouse political enthusiasm for the "brave and stainless leader" who had suffered "electoral defeat" in the face of "moral and popular victory." The chairman of the meeting, Chauncey F. Black, painted an inspiring picture of this champion of the masses, this challenger of the classes, "cut down by venal treachery . . . and overwhelmed by the tide of monopoly's corruption." And he brought the assembly to its feet with the words: "We are for tariff reform. From the high ground to which our great captain led us last year, we will not retreat one inch."

In December Mr. Cleveland made his first address of large political importance since his retirement from the Presidency. It was delivered at a dinner of the Merchants' Association of Boston, to over four hundred business men assembled to honor the ex-President. A Republican, Governor Ames, sounded the keynote in the sentence: "If wicked Democrats speak as well of me when I retire from office as Republicans now do of you, I shall be abundantly satisfied," while James Russell Lowell's letter of regret expressed the feeling of the guests with the unerring instinct of a man of genius:



Elmwood, Cambridge, Mass.

*10th Dec. 1889.*

DEAR MR. QUINCY:

I regret very much that I cannot have the pleasure of joining with you in paying respect to a man so worthy of it as Mr. Cleveland.

Let who has felt compute the strain  
Of struggle with abuses strong,  
The doubtful course, the helpless pain  
Of seeing best intents go wrong;  
We, who look on with critic eyes  
Exempt from action's crucial test,  
Human ourselves, at least are wise  
In honoring one who did his best.

Faithfully yours,

J. R. LOWELL.

JOSIAH QUINCY, ESQ.

The choice of the subject for his own address, ballot reform, had, as usual, caused Mr. Cleveland many restless hours; its preparation had given him many wretched days. But its reception at the hands of this distinguished non-partisan company fully compensated for all.

As we read the address to-day, it is difficult to understand how so commonplace a production could have made so striking an impression upon such an audience. But this was doubtless due in part to the personal popularity of the speaker, and to the skill with which he was staged by men far more anxious than he regarding this politically planned non-political appearance, this camouflaged opening gun in a campaign to make Mr. Cleveland, for a third time, the Democratic nominee for President. Mr. Cleveland, said Andrew Carnegie in the closing address

of the meeting, has "demonstrated one answer to a question of his own asking,—what to do with ex-Presidents. He has shown that one good thing to do with them is to invite them to all banquets; and in this connection the question occurs to me—why not run them again?"

Although this idea now began to be widely discussed, Mr. Cleveland himself rather discouraged than welcomed it. Living in the metropolis of the nation, close to the most powerful of all Democratic machines, he rarely met its leaders, and never cultivated them. His mind was upon the people, and his appeals were to public opinion through infrequent addresses and personal letters. He sought to influence public opinion, not to use it. He was willing to serve the nation should the nation call, but was determined not to "consent to be the candidate unless on a basis of honest principle." He would not accept leadership at the hands of machine men.

But though indifferent to the praise or blame of politicians, the letters of appreciation from admirers, known or unknown, which came in quantities from every section of the country, pleased him enormously, and his appreciation took the effective form of an answer to each, written in his own hand. To friends who protested against such an apparently useless expenditure of energy he replied: "If a fellow takes the trouble to write to me, the least I can do is to answer him."

In the early autumn the *Albany Argus* published an interview with Mr. Cleveland which made it abundantly clear that the ex-President must be regarded as permanently enlisted in the fight for tariff reform, ballot reform, civil service reform, and all other reforms calculated to relieve "the positive distress daily threatening our people's homes under the operation of a new and iniquitous tariff law," and other "reckless enactments which stifle



the results of the people's suffrage." "The party that knew no discouragement in 1888," he concluded, "will not waver nor falter in 1890." This statement greatly cheered the hearts of his followers, for they knew that, after giving it forth, Grover Cleveland would not himself waver nor falter if asked to lead the greater fight of 1892.

The November elections showed a tremendous drift back to Democracy, in the East as well as in the West, although the western victories were so associated with the Farmers' Alliance movement as to be difficult of interpretation in the terms of Democrat and Republican. Many skillful political prophets denied indeed that they pointed to Democratic victory in 1892, unless the Democratic party should adopt the cherished schemes of the Alliance. In the East, however, the interpretation was clear. Here the fight had been won upon the policies of Grover Cleveland: tariff reform, civil service reform, economy, sound money, opposition to Federal subsidies and to improper interference in local affairs. "Reckoning on the result of the last November election," commented one pro-Cleveland paper, "the Democrats have 75 electoral votes east of Pennsylvania. They carried Connecticut, with its 6 electoral votes, Massachusetts with its 15 . . . New Hampshire with its 4, New Jersey with its 10 . . . New York with 36 votes, and Rhode Island with 4." The conclusion was obvious: as the East, in 1890, voted for Democrats because of Cleveland policies, she could be relied upon to vote for them in 1892, if Cleveland should be the nominee. The South could, of course, be counted upon, whoever was nominated. The only question, therefore, was—what of the West?

While pleased with election returns in general, Mr. Cleveland was uncertain concerning Governor Hill's wing of the Democracy, and how New York would inter-

pret her duty in the pending contest for United States Senator which would show how far Hill was justified in his evident ambition to be the Democratic presidential nominee in 1892. "Of one thing you may be entirely certain," he wrote Bissell. "Hill and his friends are bent on his nomination for the Presidency, and failing in that, they are determined that it shall not come towards me. You know how I feel about this matter as a personal question; but if I have pulled any chestnuts out of the fire I want those who take them to keep civil tongues in their heads; and further . . . I don't want to see my hard work wasted and the old party fall back to shiftlessness and cheap expediency."

Mr. Cleveland was of the opinion that Hill's nomination would mean an end of the reforms toward which he himself had worked as President. The more carefully he considered the meaning of the senatorial contest in New York, the more thoroughly was he convinced that Hill ought not to be allowed to control it. On November 17th he wrote to Bissell: "What a glorious thing it would be if you could be elected to the Senate. I have been sounding about on the subject and find this to be the present condition of the thing: It is conceded in all quarters which my inquiries have reached, that Hill positively controls the situation. The gains in Legislative representation are mostly here and in Brooklyn. The members from these two localities can, if united, control the caucus within a vote or two, which of course they can easily obtain. I have not seen Weed at all, but I hear that he started in the canvass upon the supposition that Hill was pledged to his candidacy. This I believe is not now Hill's position; but instead of openly helping him he is fighting off, as I think, to pledge Weed and such friends as he has to his [Hill's] schemes. Some think



that the result of the recent elections will cause Hill to turn his eyes toward the senatorship for himself as the best thing he can now see in sight."

But increasingly prominent as his political interest of necessity became, month by month, in view of elections which passed upon his policies, his chief delight was still his home and his family. This fact is avowed in his reply to the wedding invitation of a friend, John Temple Graves:

MY DEAR MR. GRAVES:

We received the card of invitation to your wedding a day or two ago, and I am glad that your letter—received only a few hours—justifies me, on behalf of my dear wife and myself, to do more than formally notice the occasion; and, first of all, let me assure you how much we appreciate the kind and touching sentiment you convey to us in our married state.

As I look back upon the years that have passed since God in his infinite goodness bestowed upon me the best of all his gifts—a loving and affectionate wife—all else, honor, the opportunity of usefulness, and the esteem of my fellow countrymen, are subordinated in every aspiration of gratitude and thankfulness.

You are not wrong, therefore, when you claim, in the atmosphere of fast coming bliss which now surrounds you, kinship with one who can testify with unreserved tenderness to the sanctification which comes to man when heaven-directed love leads the way to marriage. Since this tender theme has made us kinsmen, let me wish for you and the dear one who is to make your life doubly dear to you, all the joy and happiness vouchsafed to man.

You will, I know, feel that your kind wishes can reach no greater sincerity and force than when my wife joins

me in the fervent desire that you and your bride may enter upon and enjoy the same felicity which has made our married life "one grand, sweet song."

Very truly your friend,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Most men begin the new year with good resolutions, and it seems likely that Mr. Cleveland faced the dawn of 1891 with the resolution to do his duty by way of speech making. Otherwise, it is difficult to see why, in view of his oft-repeated declaration to intimate and confidential friends that he did not wish to be nominated again for the Presidency, he consented to begin the new year with a political speech.

It was delivered in Philadelphia on the eighth of January, at the annual celebration of the Battle of New Orleans, and was one of his ablest addresses, breathing throughout that high moral standard which had characterized his own public life. It was, moreover, a campaign document of no mean character, calculated to appeal to the party pride of Democrats, and to rally them to the defense of the great reforms for which his name stood. In it, in one compact and illuminating paragraph, he recited as the principles of true democracy: "equal and exact justice for all men; peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations—entangling alliance with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor; a jealous care of the right of election by the people; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expenses; the honest payment of our debts and sacred preservation of the public faith; the encouragement of agriculture,



and commerce as its handmaid, and freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of the person."

The remainder of the address was an elaboration of each of these principles from the history of the two parties: the Democrats being painted—but not too shamelessly—as having in general observed them; while the Republicans, having in general disregarded them, were now listening "for the footsteps of that death which destroys parties false to their trust." "Thus," he declared, "when we see the functions of government used to enrich the few at the expense of the many, and see also its inevitable result in the pinching privation of the poor and the profuse extravagance of the rich; and when we see in operation an unjust tariff which banishes from many humble homes the comforts of life, in order that in the palaces of wealth luxury may more abound, we turn to our creed and find that it enjoins 'equal and exact justice to all men.'"

Of course no one could be really eloquent in a sentence of such length and complexity; but the speech represents near-eloquence and in some passages, weeded of the usual Clevelandesque verbiage, we catch the gleam of real eloquence. It is so with the brilliant sub-title, "principles enduring because they are right, and invincible because they are just." It is so with the paragraph which declares: "It is right that every man should enjoy the results of his labor to the fullest extent consistent with his membership in a civilized community. It is right that our Government should be but the instrument of the people's will, and that its cost should be limited within the lines of strict economy. It is right that the influence of the Government should be known in every humble home as the guardian of frugal comfort and content, and a defense against unjust exactions, and the unearned

tribute persistently coveted by the selfish and designing. It is right that efficiency and honesty in public service should not be sacrificed to partisan greed; and it is right that the suffrage of our people should be pure and free."

In February, 1891, there came one of those choices between principle and expediency which always showed Mr. Cleveland at his best. The situation was typical of his career. The question had arisen as to what response he should make to an invitation of the Reform Club to attend a banquet at which the free coinage of silver was to be attacked. Most of his advisers thought he should keep silent on the subject, lest the chance of his nomination be injured. To these Mr. Cleveland's reply was characteristic: "I am supposed to be a leader in my party. If any word of mine can check these dangerous fallacies, it is my duty to give that word, whatever the cost may be to me."

He, therefore, used the occasion to denounce the free silver bill then pending before the Senate, and believed to be favored by almost every Democratic Senator, and by the great doubtful West. His letter, which Charles Francis Adams pronounced "one of the most creditable utterances that ever came from an American public character," reads as follows:

*February 10, 1891.*

E. ELLERY ANDERSON, Chairman:

Dear Sir:

I have this afternoon received your note inviting me to attend tomorrow evening the meeting called for the purpose of voicing the opposition of the business men of our city to "the free coinage of silver in the United States."

I shall not be able to attend and address the meeting



as you request, but I am glad that the business interests of New York are at last to be heard on this subject. It surely cannot be necessary for me to make a formal expression of my agreement with those who believe that the greatest peril would be invited by the adoption of the scheme, embraced in the measure now pending in Congress, for the unlimited coinage of silver at our mints.

If we have developed an unexpected capacity for the assimilation of a largely increased volume of this currency, and even if we have demonstrated the usefulness of such an increase, these conditions fall far short of insuring us against disaster if, in the present situation, we enter upon the dangerous and reckless experiment of free, unlimited, and independent silver coinage.

Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

At once the cry went up from Democratic machine men all over the country that this was the end of Grover Cleveland. Hill's friends hastened to call the attention of "real Democrats" to the fact that, months before, Governor Hill had declared for free coinage. The greatest indignation was manifested throughout the South and West, where faith in free silver was large and increasing. The more conservative East, however, applauded his wisdom and praised his courage. "It matters not," commented the *Philadelphia Daily Evening Telegram*, "whether such a man be of one party or another. It is enough that he is an American statesman to whom the welfare of the country is greater, more important, than self."

When a friend, years later, commented upon Mr. Cleveland's courage in thus defying the clamor of the free silver element in his own party in the face of a presiden-

tial election in which he was to be a candidate, Mr. Cleveland replied: "It does not begin to be as hard as the stand I had to take, years ago, in Albany, relative to the five-cent fare bill. I vetoed the bill and felt I had driven the last nail into my political coffin."

The denunciations had not ceased when, in the summer, he retired to Gray Gables for the quiet out-of-door life which he loved; and from this calm retreat he wrote to Gilder: "How little and frivolous all this seems to me! Not because I do not realize the importance of everything in the remotest way connected with the great office of President, but because they appear to be indices of the meanness and malice of men and politicians. So all this time I am wondering when the bluefish will be about and biting."

He kept a very watchful eye upon the anti-Cleveland movement, nevertheless, and his comments upon Hill, Sheehan, Tammany Hall, and the rest of the local "gang" were frankly pugilistic, as he watched their clever schemes for his own elimination, and for the defeat of the policies which he advocated.

On July 3d, he wrote to Lamont: "My only thought about politics is that we are great fools if we allow ourselves to be hauled about by Hill and his gang. I know that I, who am doing next to nothing to prevent such a condition, ought not to expect others to inordinately exert themselves; but I do hope the thing will not be neglected so long as the pins will be fixed fast and strong against us. My information and my belief is, that Tammany Hall will not aid us. They don't like me—never did and never will—and they will not help any movement with which my name is associated. Of course you know I am ready to take my discharge papers and be very obedient and faithful—except in one contingency." That contin-



gency, which seemed to him at the moment impossible, was a nomination which would leave him free to serve the people without any sense of obligation to seekers after spoils.

On October 8th, a great Democratic mass meeting was held in Cooper Union, New York. Mr. Cleveland had been prevailed upon to preside, and introduce Governor Hill and other Democratic notables. The audience was large, so large that the elated managers expressed the regret that they had not taken Madison Square Garden. Mr. Cleveland's appearance was greeted with a tremendous ovation; and his brief introductory address, full of caustic references to the Republican party and somewhat unblushing praise for the Democrats, whom his private letters of late had not praised over much, was enthusiastically received. It was the speech of a man who, after heavy trials, sees the people at last turning their faces back to him, and it was effective.

"Never has the irresistible strength of the principles of Democracy been more fully exemplified," he said. "From the west and from the east come tidings of victory. In the popular branch of the next Congress, the party which lately impudently arrogated to itself the domination of that body will fill hardly more than one fourth of its seats. Democratic governors occupy the enemy's strongholds in Iowa, Massachusetts, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Michigan. In Pennsylvania the election of a Democratic governor presents conclusive proof of Republican corruption exposed, and Republican dishonesty detected." He also touched upon tariff reform, making it perfectly clear that, if Grover Cleveland were coming back, he would come, like the ancient Roman Sibyl, without abating one jot or one tittle of the demands which had been his political undoing in 1888.

But the thought of coming back was little in his mind those days. Five days before the Cooper Union meeting, his first child, Ruth, was born, and the glory of her advent completely dwarfed all else.

"The house is perfectly quiet," he wrote to Bissell, on October 21st. "I have just been up, to find my wife and child sleeping, and the nurse too. Only our mother-in-law awake.

"I feel an impulse to write to you. And I feel, too, that unless I make an effort, I shall write in a strange fashion to you. I who have just entered the real world, and see in a small child more of value than I have ever called my own before; who puts aside as hardly worth a thought, all that has gone before—fame, honor, place, everything—reach out my hand to you and fervently express the wish—the best my great friendship for you yields—that in safety and in joy you may soon reach my estate.

"I think a great deal about you and your dear wife just now. I think a little of your anxiety and suspense, a little of the cloud that must pass over her, but a great deal of the joy and happiness that will come to both of you when anxiety and suspense are over and the cloud is past.

"Give our love to Mrs. Bissell and let me know when you are made happy.

"Yours faithfully,

GROVER CLEVELAND."



## CHAPTER XIII

### AN UNPRECEDENTED RESTORATION

*"It's a funny thing for a man to be running for the Presidency with all the politicians against him."*

—GROVER CLEVELAND.

AS Grover Cleveland watched the winter deepen toward the Christmas season, his thoughts were less than usual thoughts of peace and good will. Reluctantly he had reached the conclusion that David B. Hill was wrecking the Democratic party by his methods in New York. "Hill's performances in Albany and the late proceedings of the State Committee," he wrote to Bissell on December 4th, ". . . convince me that we are either rushing to overwhelming defeat or the people are heedless of everything political that may happen. Was it for this that we braved temporary defeat in order that we might stand on principle? And what becomes of all our fine promises to the people? If we have much more of the work that is now disgracing us and the people do not resent it, I shall think the people are not worth saving or serving." And a week later he added: "I have every possible desire to see our party succeed on decent honest lines, and have a strong disinclination to being exhibited at the tail end of a procession which means the betrayal of the principles we profess and the deception of the people. It seems very ridiculous for the State of New York to claim any sympathy with the professed aims of the National Democracy, and to still be content to follow the lead of Hill, Murphy & Co."

The opening of the presidential year 1892 found him again laboriously preparing an address on Andrew Jackson. Of the real Andrew Jackson he knew little, as the not infrequent references to him in letters and speeches abundantly demonstrate. But of the "Andrew Jackson cult," the national Democracy annually worshipping at Jackson's shrine, he knew a great deal; and his speech was a skillful appeal to its votaries to exhibit the Jacksonian qualities—vigor, courage, honesty of purpose, steady persistency—in the coming elections. "We who are proud to call ourselves Jacksonian Democrats," he said, "have boldly and aggressively attacked a political heresy opposed to the best interests of the people and defended by an arrogant and unscrupulous party. The fight is still on. Who has the hardihood to say that we can lay claim to the least Jacksonian spirit if, in the struggle, we turn our backs to the enemy or lower in the least our colors?" This was good Jackson doctrine; but it was equally good Cleveland doctrine, for of each it may justly be said that, in a fight, his only use for a back was to put it against the wall.

While containing little of lasting value, this address made it clear, were there doubters, that the principles of the tariff message of 1887 were still the fighting issues of Grover Cleveland. If Democracy was ready again to march to battle for those principles, their leader would not fail them, if called upon. He was, however, still only a willing, not an eager, potential leader.

As it chanced, this January 8th marked the turning point. While Cleveland in New York was lauding Jackson, Democrats throughout the nation were reading the call for the assembling of their national convention, and the Hill-Murphy machine was planning a *coup* which would eliminate Grover Cleveland and give to David B.



Hill the entire New York delegation. In total disregard of precedent, and despite the fact that the Democratic National Committee had set June 21st as the date for the National Convention, they issued, upon short notice, a call for a state convention, to be held at Albany on February 22nd.

The meaning of such a move was not lost on the country. Everywhere it was interpreted as a scheme of machine men to beat the man they could not buy, and to trim a New York boss with Tammany backing for the Presidency. The undemocratic character of the movement was denounced in headlines throughout the country as the "Snap Convention" idea. But the New York machine had the power, and could not be turned from its purpose to use it.

As early as September 26, 1891, C. S. Cary had sent to Mr. Cleveland a warning that "there is a combination between Croker, Hill, and Murphy to control the Democratic party of this State, by resort to the most outrageous methods that have ever been resorted to in the State." And now the facts were plainly fulfilling the prediction, although neither Murphy, Croker, nor Hill was the originator of the idea. Writing fifteen years after the event, St. Clair McKelway, who certainly knew the facts and who as certainly had no predisposition to guard the memory of Hill, declared: "The February 22, 1892, Snap State Convention was not brought about on Governor Hill's initiative. He was asked to bring it on by those who deserted him, when he complied with their request. The others were Senator Gorman of Maryland, Senator Palmer of Illinois, and Senator Voorhees of Indiana."

Gorman and Palmer, quite as really as David B. Hill, were seeking the Democratic nomination, but both had

managed to conceal that fact from the watchful eyes of their astute associates in this important cold-storage enterprise. Murphy's eyes, while not venturing to seek the White House, gazed at New York's empty seat in the United States Senate, and tiger-like, he hunted silently that other tiger, Richard Croker, treading softly at his side, knowing by experience that he would share the game when taken. But whoever deserves the doubtful honor of having invented the "Snap Convention" idea, it was Hill who paid the penalty. He alone took, openly and eagerly, the gambler's chance, only to find that it was not the hour of the gambler.

Just before the meeting of the State Committee, William C. Whitney penciled a protest against the idea of a Snap Convention, which Ellery Anderson, R. G. Monroe and others presented in person, but it produced no effect. As soon as the protestants retired, the call for the Snap Convention of February 22nd was issued. At once indignant Democrats, headed by Charles S. Fairchild, Frederick R. Coudert, William R. Grace, and Ellery Anderson, met at the Murray Hill Hotel, and denounced the plan, declaring that "the outcome of a convention selected in midwinter upon so short a call cannot be fairly and truly representative of the Democratic sentiment of the State, and would inevitably debar the mass of Democratic voters from the voice to which they are justly entitled in the selection of the Democratic candidates for President and Vice President and the framing of the party's platform."

This was the beginning of a determined fight against Hill and his political methods. Cleveland Democrats signed and circulated petitions denouncing the Snap Convention idea, to be themselves denounced by Chairman Murphy, but to be praised in press and in pulpit through-



out the state and beyond. When the Snap Convention assembled, a committee headed by Mr. Fairchild appeared with another spirited protest against the proceeding. And when this protest too was unheeded, they at once carried out their contingent instructions to issue a call for a state convention, to be held at Syracuse in May, in order that a contesting New York delegation might find ready supporters when the National Convention should assemble.

While the Hill-Murphy clans were gathering at Albany, Cleveland was starting for Ann Arbor to make the Washington's Birthday address to the students of the University of Michigan. It was his desire to make the trip as unostentatiously as possible, but his political sponsors thought otherwise, and arranged for a special train, with all the camp following of an ex-President contemplating a speedy abbreviation of the title.

In the cars adjoining his was the standard collection of politicians, who passed the time in gloomy predictions regarding the pending fate of their leader at the hands of machine men, protective tariff men, silver men, pension men, and other especially horrific enemies, and who gravely prophesied with reference to the chances of Hill. Fresh in their minds was the memory of Mr. Cleveland's recent "injudicious" attack upon free silver, and of Hill's "more politic" utterances; and it was the general opinion that "the old man's done for." One said, "I begged him not to write that anti-silver letter, but he would do it, and it has killed him. It has caused such a split that nothing can be done."

But upon the platform at Ann Arbor the next day Mr. Cleveland showed that something could be done. He delivered a speech on "The Character of George Washington" which threw a flood of light upon the character

of Grover Cleveland. A speech with less apparent political significance could hardly have been devised. But its almost childlike profession of faith in the homely virtues of truth, fidelity to duty, family affection, and trust in God, took hold upon the people as no learned discourse, no political invective, could have done.

His listeners felt, as did the millions who read the address or who heard echoes of its teachings, that here was a public man whose record entitled him to discuss ethical standards for public officials, standards which mean "the exaction of moral principle and personal honor and honesty and goodness as indispensable credentials to political preferment." "I know," he said, "that the decrees of God are never obsolete. . . . Do not surrender your faith to those who discredit and debase politics by scoffing at sentiment and principle, and whose political activity consists in attempts to gain popular support by cunning devices and shrewd manipulation."

It is quite apparent that the Snap Convention was in his mind when he wrote these lines, but he came no nearer to the discussion of pending political issues. He was content to deal with principles, believing that the people would themselves make the practical application at the proper time. "The people are not dead, but sleeping," he declared. "They will awaken in good time, and scourge the money changers from their sacred temple." Mr. Cleveland's friends, not satisfied to leave the awakening of the people solely to chance incidents, planned the publicity releases in such a way that the public read Cleveland's Ann Arbor speech and the incidents of the Snap Convention in the same issues of their local papers.

From a comparison of his methods with those of the Cleveland faction, Hill saw no reason to shrink. He had won his state delegation by the skillful use of means con-



secrated by generations of service, and no spiritual misgivings arose to cloud the sunshine of his satisfaction. "I am a Democrat," was his oft-repeated phrase, and he was satisfied that he had won his preliminary contest with Grover Cleveland by methods which Democrats would approve. Indeed, to his dying day he insisted that his Snap Convention was entirely creditable. "I was," he wrote to St. Clair McKelway sixteen years later, "a candidate for the Presidential nomination in 1892. . . . The New York delegation had been instructed for me in its State Convention which had been duly called on the usual thirty days' notice and in which there was not really a contested seat, and I was entitled to the full vote of the State in the National Convention."

Mr. Cleveland returned from Ann Arbor, well pleased with the signs of favor shown him in the West and somewhat elated at the reception which his Washington's Birthday address had received.

"I arrived home Thursday morning, quite tired and with my hand a little lame, but feeling pretty well," he wrote Bissell on March first. "My trip has started up a number of invitations from colleges, &c., in different parts of the country, but I intend to 'stay put' now for awhile. I had a very warm invitation from Yale this morning.

"The protesting movement seems to move on without much abatement. It's wonderful how well the situation in New York is understood in every corner of the land. If things go on I shall not be surprised if Tammany Hall hears some very plain language next June. The question in my mind now is whether it would not be better for the convention in May to send a *committee* to Chicago instead of *delegates* claiming admission. Within the last day or two I have heard quite a little talk about my doing

something. Some want me to write a letter denying that I have withdrawn, &c. Others rather hint that I should do something still more pronounced. A letter might be carefully written that would steer clear of anything like self-assertion and which might still plainly present the fact that I did not intend, for personal reasons and to satisfy personal inclinations, to abandon those enlisted in a cause to which they deem me useful. My personal desire you fully understand, but I am going to tell you how I think the matter may progress.

“Congress will do about all the fool things it can, nearly, or quite (so far as they can), committing the party to the silver craze and puttering with tariff reform until it is tired and sick as an issue. When the Convention meets the representatives of the party will perhaps see the condition—that they have nearly lost the only issues upon which there is the least hope of carrying the Country. If they do, they will see that they must have a man who in his person and record represents exactly the things so nearly thrown away and the direct opposite of all that they have tried to do.

“If such a man is nominated, the Democratic masses and the honest men of non-Democratic affiliations will feel so relieved and so happy in the prospect of political salvation that an enthusiasm will be furnished to the campaign that will be irresistible. If matters should take on such a complexion present politics would be brushed aside without any ceremony. A good sound new man might just fit the situation. The people in the eastern states, especially Massachusetts, are very much roused and I should not be surprised if they spoke quite emphatically very soon. Every man in this state ought to be well considered.”

This letter makes it abundantly clear that Mr. Cleve-



land even yet did not have his heart set upon a return to the White House. It was, however, a private letter, written to an intimate and confidential friend, and as such not given to the press. It therefore did nothing to enlighten the thousands of eager friends and the thousands of even more eager enemies who were awaiting his declaration.

On March 9th, in reply to the oft-repeated question: "Will you be a candidate in 1892?" he wrote to the Honorable Edward S. Bragg, author of the slogan, "We love him for the enemies he has made":

MY DEAR SIR:

Your letter of the 5th inst. is received. I have thought until now that I might continue silent on the subject which, under the high sanction of your position as my "fellow-Democrat and fellow-citizen," and in your relation as a true and trusted friend, you present to me. If, in answering your question, I might only consider my personal desires and my individual ease and comfort, my response would be promptly made, and without the least reservation or difficulty.

But if you are right in supposing that the subject is related to a duty I owe to the country and to my party, a condition exists which makes such private and personal considerations entirely irrelevant. I cannot, however, refrain from declaring to you that my experience in the great office of President of the United States has so impressed me with the solemnity of the trust and its awful responsibilities, that I cannot bring myself to regard a candidacy for the place as something to be won by personal strife and active self-assertion.

I have also an idea that the Presidency is pre-eminently the people's office, and I have been sincere in my

constant advocacy of the effective participation in political affairs on the part of all our citizens. Consequently, I believe the people should be heard in the choice of their party candidates, and that they themselves should make nominations as directly as is consistent with open, fair, and full party organizations and methods.

I speak of these things solely for the purpose of advising you that my conception of the nature of the Presidential office, and my conviction that the voters of our party should be free in the selection of their candidates, preclude the possibility of my leading and pushing a self-seeking canvass for the Presidential nomination, even if I had a desire to be again a candidate.

Believing that the complete supremacy of Democratic principles means increased national prosperity and the increased happiness of our people, I am earnestly anxious for the success of the party. I am confident success is still within our reach, but I believe this is a time for Democratic thoughtfulness and deliberation, not only as to candidates, but concerning party action upon questions of immense interest to the patriotic and intelligent voters of the land, who watch for an assurance of safety as the price of their confidence and support.

Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

And so the die was cast, and from that moment Grover Cleveland stood before the country as a candidate for a third nomination.

Five days later came encouraging news from Nebraska, whose State Convention rejected, on a square vote forced by the able and brilliant Congressman, William Jennings Bryan, a resolution favoring the unlimited coinage of silver. Mr. Bryan's boundless personal popu-



larity, which equaled in Nebraska Mr. Cleveland's popularity in the country at large, could not save him. He was on the floor, and in the lobbies of the convention; he was everywhere, with personal appeal for himself, and he was beaten—beaten by the power of a Cleveland wave which had swept over the state, inflaming public opinion with a desire to see the ex-President restored to the White House. Indeed, only the fear that New York would be lost should Cleveland be nominated, prevented the Nebraska Convention from instructing for him.

Mr. Cleveland was quite conscious of the growing power of the "silver heresy" and was determined that his nomination, if it came at all, should come with the clear knowledge that he was the implacable enemy of free silver. The idea of going down to defeat lashed to party planks of sound political principles caused him no alarm. To be beaten on account of unpopular principles was to him far preferable to winning a victory based upon unsound principles. This feeling he set forth in detail, in a letter to Mr. Justice Lamar:

"I have within the last few months passed through much that has been trying and perplexing to me. The office of president has not to me personally a single allure-ment. I shrink from everything which another canvass and its result involves. I know what another election means, and I know as well the dark depths that yawn at the foot of another defeat. I would avoid either if I should consult alone my peace, my comfort or my desire.

"My discomforts arise from a sense of duty to honest people and devoted friends. I am alone with my own thoughts and with the apparent trust and confidence of my countrymen. Am I mistaken in all this, and are my country and my party prepared to discharge me from

service? One thing I know. Forces are at work which certainly mean the complete turning back of the hands on the dial of democracy, and the destruction of party hopes.

“Is it ordained that I am to be the instrument through which democratic principles can be saved, whether party supremacy immediately awaits us or not? If folly is to defeat us in any event, ought I to be called upon to place myself under the falling timber? This last consideration smacks a little of care for self, which perhaps ought to be discarded.

“You shall know, my dear friend, my inmost thoughts. I shall be obedient to the call of my country and my party. Whatever happens, no one shall say that I refused to serve in time of evil, or abandoned those whom I have been instrumental in calling to the field, when is waged the battle for democratic principle. If I am given my discharge I shall thank God most fervently. I can easily be disposed of, either by the selection of a candidate more available, or by the adoption of a campaign policy on the financial question which I am not willing to further. In the first case, I shall be a happy helper; in the second, I shall sadly await the announcement of a party defeat which will be predetermined.

“Our southern friends, if they persist, will be left alone with their free coinage heresy. The west is slipping away from their side. The danger is that another idea, and a charge of heedlessness for the public safety on the financial question will do service in the place of the memories of the civil war.

“The question is often and justifiably put by friendly southerners, ‘Can Cleveland carry New York?’ The answer is ready as to Cleveland or any other man, if the democracy is at all weak on the coinage question.



"As one who loves his country and believes that her interest is bound up in democratic supremacy, I am most uncomfortable and unhappy in the fear that the south will not see until too late the danger of their marring all."

This letter shows how clear was his conviction, even at this early date, that for the Democratic party to adopt the free silver heresy was to court certain defeat at the hands of the people—a remarkable instance of a vision ahead of his party, and in fact of both parties; for until the crisis of 1896 was over and the Democrats were committed to free silver, both parties were uncertain upon the question which in Mr. Cleveland's view was only one of common sense and common honesty.

In May Mr. Whitney returned from Europe and assumed the leadership of the Cleveland movement. He found that there were more delegates favorable to Cleveland than to Hill, but he found also that every New York delegate had signed a protest against the ex-President's renomination. As an experienced leader, Whitney knew this to be a heavy handicap, especially in the case of a candidate who had led the party twice already, the second time to electoral defeat. He was conscious also that the regulars regarded a Democratic victory in November as well-nigh certain, even should the convention choose a candidate unacceptable to the Mugwumps; for the country was weary of Republican rule and high tariffs.

When the contesting delegation, "the May delegates," as Mr. Cleveland called his "anti-snap" representatives, were ready to start for Chicago, Whitney took control, resolved not to fight to seat the "May delegates," but to win a nomination without their votes. To his mind it was no longer a question of disputing the control of New York with the Hill-Murphy machine, but of securing the nomination of Mr. Cleveland under conditions

least likely to divide the party. In preliminary conferences with Cleveland men from every state Whitney checked up the Cleveland vote. Upon the basis of reports carefully probed, he decided that at least six hundred delegates would vote for Cleveland on the first ballot. Under these conditions, it was manifestly wise to avoid an open contest with the corporal's guard which had come prepared to vote for Hill.

In the meantime, Senator Gorman had made similar canvasses and had reached a similar conclusion. He therefore deserted the Hill camp and went over to the Cleveland forces, to be speedily followed by Senator Palmer, while Senator Voorhees, the third member of the trio which had launched the Snap Convention, retired to Indiana, leaving his followers to make such terms as they could with the Whitney-led forces of Grover Cleveland.

Mr. Cleveland was far less confident of victory than were his friends. On June 11th he wrote to Bissell:

"I am delighted to know that you are going to Chicago, for if my name is presented there and there is any danger of my nomination, I shall feel very safe and comfortable if a few such good and discreet friends as you are on the spot. . . . You may not understand, and perhaps will not entirely approve, the way the thing has drifted; but I have been fully convinced that nothing better could be done in this thing than to have Whitney pretty well to the front in the matter of management and organization. In point of fact, it has already gravitated to that point. Associated with him from N. Y. State I hope will be Bissell, Cady Herrick, Tracy, Stetson and such others as are like-minded and are wise and useful. . . .

"One reason why I hope the persons I have mentioned



will work together is found in my anxiety about the platform of the Convention. Of course as a Democrat I want a good platform for the success of our party; and if I should chance to be in any way related to it, it must be sound, especially in the money plank. If the nomination to the Presidency passes by me I shall be anything but disappointed or afflicted; but for the nomination, or for anything else, I cannot forego my opinions nor appear to shuffle or falter on the financial question. . . . While I want to do my duty to my party and the good people of the Country, I am still perfectly sincere in saying that the result which would bring to me the greatest personal gratification would be the nomination of some other good man and good Democrat. And this is quite consistent with my great satisfaction and gratitude for all that is done for me."

Among the things that had been done for him was the installation at his summer home of a telegraph operator, that to some extent the ex-President might follow, moment by moment, the developments in the convention. There were of course many details which could not be sent over the wire, much business being transacted in secret.

At Chicago, his friends, like those of every candidate since the convention system was inaugurated, conciliated, coaxed, promised, and bargained with those who controlled the floating votes. His enemies lurking in the corridors captured these same doubtful delegates as they left his friends and spread before them counter-promises, threats, and intimidations, pointing to past defeats and predicting future disasters if this man Cleveland should be again chosen to lead the party.

At the beginning of these conferences the anti-Cleve-

land men were jubilantly confident, but as they talked to delegation after delegation they began to see that a surprising number were from sections where the people had shown an unmistakable desire for Cleveland leadership. What was the explanation? They had played the dead march over him. But now, ears to the ground, they heard the sound of the "master's" voice—the people were speaking the name, Grover Cleveland. Why? They could not tell. He lacked the magic personality which had at times made anti-machine men irresistible. He was in no sense either dramatic or picturesque. He could not be looked upon as a campaigner, for he was opposed to the idea of a candidate for the Presidency pleading his own cause from the stump. As a public speaker, furthermore, he was as uninspiring as reluctant. He never spoke unless compelled by a sense of duty, and then with few of the arts of the orator. He promised no favors, courted no leaders, conciliated no mobs. Why such a man should defy the laws of politics, long accepted as immutable, and rise from his political grave to the discomfiture of the regulars, no regular could understand. But that he was to be the controlling force in that convention few doubted after the first few hours of preliminary skirmishing.

When at last the private wire in the gun room at Gray Gables began to click off the proceedings, moment by moment, the excitement of his companions—Mrs. Cleveland, Mr. and Mrs. William E. Russell, Mr. Joseph Jefferson and his two sons—became intense. Indeed, of that little company only one appeared entirely at ease, and that one was Grover Cleveland. Once he arose with the surprising statement, "I forgot to dry my lines," and retired to the garden to stretch his fishing line across the laundress's drying ground.



As the nomination speeches began, the gun room waited, breathless. The honor of naming Grover Cleveland had fallen to Governor Leon Abbett of New Jersey, not because of any particular Cleveland enthusiasm on his part, as he was an old-line politician with a sneaking sympathy for Hill, but because, in opposition to his wishes, the New Jersey delegation were under instructions "to vote for Mr. Cleveland so long as his name should be before the convention." When the roll call reached Arkansas, she yielded to New Jersey. "Governor Abbett is nominating Grover Cleveland," reported the private wire; and then followed the usual bewildering succession of speeches, lasting until midnight.

Shortly after twelve o'clock, the roll of the states complete, the weary delegates and the thousands of weary onlookers, including the select company in the gun room, were rallying their jaded minds for the long-expected first ballot, when the famous Tammany orator, Bourke Cockran, furnished a diversion. Apparently unconscious of the fact that more oratory was what the convention least desired, in the face of a tempest which was raging without and an anti-Tammany victory which was imminent within, he mounted the platform and for an hour and a half held his weary audience of hostile but charmed listeners by the eloquence of his attack upon Grover Cleveland and his support of Hill. When Cockran had finished his last rounded period and resumed his seat, the Cleveland men, without a word of reply, moved that a ballot be taken.

The vote came to the gun room, state by state, as the roll was called. Mr. Cleveland occupied a chair immediately in front of the window, and just opposite him sat Joe Jefferson, the rest of the little company being in the center of the room. Thus grouped, they had watched

night fall. Now sunrise was approaching, as they tabulated the call of states. Six hundred and seven must be registered in the Cleveland column before the traditional two-thirds majority would be complete.

Glancing out of the window during one of the pauses between reports from the operator, Mrs. Cleveland remarked that a little stream in the center of the landscape had caught the crimson glow of dawn. Then came another report, and another, and then, just as the first ray of sunshine strayed through the window, touching Mr. Cleveland's head, the operator gave the final touch to the picture by announcing: "Mr. Cleveland is nominated."

That lone ballot tells the tale of the astonishing failure of the Hill campaign, the Snap Convention, and the Tammany orator combined; and of the still more astonishing strength of Grover Cleveland:

Whole number of votes.....	909 1-2
Number necessary for 2-3 majority	607
Grover Cleveland of New York...	617 1-3
David B. Hill of New York.....	114
Horace Boies of Iowa .....	103
Arthur P. Gorman of Maryland..	36 1-2
Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois....	16 2-3
John G. Carlisle of Kentucky.....	14
William R. Morrison of Illinois..	3
James E. Campbell of Ohio.....	2
William C. Whitney of New York	1
William E. Russell of Massa- chusetts .....	1
Robert E. Pattison of Pennsylvania	1

The platform, as at first reported by the committee, was alarmingly stand-pat upon the vital issue of the tariff;



but Mr. Cleveland's friends fought it in open convention and won by the convincing majority of 564 to 342. As a result the platform ended with the following words, which might have been written by Mr. Cleveland himself: "We reiterate the oft-repeated doctrines of the Democratic party that the necessity of government is the only justification for taxation, and that whenever a tax is unnecessary it is unjustifiable; that when custom house taxation is levied upon articles of any kind produced in this country, the difference between cost of labor here and labor abroad, when such a difference exists, fully measures any possible benefits to labor, and the enormous additional impositions of existing tariff fall with crushing force upon our farmers and workingmen and for the mere advantage of the few whom it enriches, exact from labor a grossly unjust share of the expenses of the Government, and we demand such a revision of the tariff laws as will remove their iniquitous inequalities, lighten their oppression and put them on a Constitutional and equitable basis."

From returning delegates Mr. Cleveland received those unpublished secrets in which every convention abounds. At first the May delegates from New York had been anxious for a trial of strength with the Snap Convention delegates. But Mr. Whitney, confident of the soundness of his preliminary calculations, insisted that "they could not afford to split New York; that if Hill bolted, we would lose the state; that the one thing we were after was to have our candidate nominated and elected." He carried his point and also his program, and for that reason no fair criticism can be made of the way he handled the Cleveland interests. There was, however, much bitter criticism; but from the following letter to

Bissell it is evident that it received no encouragement from Mr. Cleveland:

Gray Gables,  
Buzzards Bay, Mass.  
*June 30, 1892.*

MY DEAR BISSELL:

I was delighted to receive your letter yesterday and thank you for it. I think the way you looked into my hand in the matter of dealing with certain parties is "perfectly lovely," as the ladies say. I will not attempt to tell you even a small part of what is in my mind and heart in the way of admiration and gratitude for all that was done at Chicago. All was superb, and it was almost uncanny to sit here at the end of a wire and see and hear and feel and know it all as it transpired. Of course my duty now is to be as good a candidate as possible, and do all I can to aid success.

I do not think Murphy or Sheehan should be at all prominent in the campaign. In point of fact, I think neither of them, nor any of that kind of thing, should have the least direction of it. But I do think—indeed I know—that Whitney should nominally, if not really and actively, be at the head of the Committee to manage the National Campaign. I have regarded it as exceedingly desirable on my own judgment, and the letters I have received within a few days and the expressions I have heard made convince me that it is more essential and vital to success than any one thing. . . .

I don't see how your baby got "them teeth." Ours could have plenty of them, I suppose, if she wanted them, but she don't eat any roasted beef or things of that kind—so what's the use? . . .

I have never received so many and such warm and



enthusiastic congratulations, but thus far not one from any state official in New York, and almost none from the Hill following. This is queer, and I think it will be a good thing to let them dwell a while with their *alleged* reasons and consciences.

I have written a queer kind of letter to Tammany Hall, to be read at its Fourth of July celebration. I shall watch and see how that takes.

God bless you and your dear wife and baby. We all send love to them and you. I hear Ruth crowing and carrying on now.

Yours faithfully,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Mr. Cleveland faced the campaign with a solemn sense of responsibility, but with the grateful consciousness that the people had demanded his return, and that he was to be allowed to reopen the case which the election of 1888 had decided against him, and against the majority of the people. He had won a moral victory and one without guilt or tinsel. He had been nominated on his merit, not "by cunning devices and shrewd manipulation," against which he had so earnestly warned the students of the University of Michigan.

From the point of view of those trained to trust such methods, his return was a political miracle. They had discovered no machine adequate to so great a task, and the idea that his nomination was the natural result of a popular enthusiasm for an honest public servant was to them fanciful. That there had been a sort of machine they knew, of course. The Anti-Snappers had covered the land with their moral protest against the methods and aims of Hill and Murphy. But it was a machine designed to give the people the facts, not one organized to

promise them offices, and its methods would have been entirely ineffective had not four years of sober second thought convinced the country that Grover Cleveland had been an honest public servant, fearless and painstaking, thinking first of duty and the people, and not even second of self.

There was still another element, of the existence of which his enemies had of necessity been ignorant. The thousands of personal letters which he had written during the brief period of his retirement had greatly strengthened his hold upon the public. Every man who had received such a letter faced the question of a party candidate with a sense of personal relationship with Grover Cleveland, and the convention delegates were made to appreciate this fact. Thus in almost every section of the country he possessed friends whose enthusiasm no local politician could cool, and who labored for his nomination, and later for his election, in a spirit rarely seen among political workers.

After some delay, the notification ceremony was set for Wednesday evening, July 20th, and Madison Square Garden was selected. The *Philadelphia Public Ledger* thus pictured Mr. Cleveland's appearance upon the occasion: "Whatever may have been his feelings, Grover Cleveland's face looked painfully sad as he stood on the platform and looked over the vast audience gathered to do him honor. Perhaps no other man ever experienced a greater personal triumph than he did at that time. Against all political precedent, and against bitter personal opposition, he had been nominated for the third time to the highest office in the world, and there he stood, in the biggest hall of the greatest city of the State which had voted against him at Chicago, and in the presence of his enemies, as well as of his friends, and amid the plaudits



of 20,000 people was formally notified of his nomination. No Roman conquerer ever had a more notable triumph. No political leader in this country was ever welcomed by a grander audience.

"Yet there was not the slightest sign of triumph in his face. His countenance mirrored forth no exultation of soul, no pride of victory, no joy over the discomfiture of his enemies. He did not smile once from the time he entered the hall until he left it, but surveyed the scene of triumph with a face that showed more humility than pride, more sadness than joy. At one time indeed it seemed as if he were going to break down and shed tears—this man of iron will and nerves of oak.

"He seemed to regard the occasion with the feeling of a priest who is being consecrated for the holy services of bishop. But he never lost his self-possession and . . . repeated his speech from memory without the change of a single word. Reporters who held his printed speech in their hands and followed him word by word testify to this fact."

But a Democratic nomination is by no means an election, and as Mr. Cleveland watched the progress of affairs in Washington he grew uneasy lest the foolish in his own party, in their infatuation for the heresy of free silver, should give President Harrison an opportunity to seize the sound money standard as the Republican battle flag.

"If the Democratic House of Representatives," he wrote to Congressman Harter on July 7th, "permits a free silver bill to go to Mr. Harrison for his veto, those responsible for it will, in my opinion, stand a chance to gain the same splendid notoriety as the man who burned the Temple of Diana." On this question he felt as Daniel Webster had felt about the Democratic advocacy of the policy of the Wilmot proviso: "It is not their thunder."

In his brief response to the formal notification of his nomination, however, he failed to touch the subject of free silver, again devoting his attention chiefly to the task of flaying "the selfish schemes of those who seek through the aid of unequal tariff laws to gain unearned and unreasonable advantages at the expense of their fellows." He was determined that as he had against advice and warning led the party to defeat on the tariff issue, he would now lead it to victory upon that selfsame question.

The condition of the New York Democracy was constantly on his mind. "Fishing or eating, reading or drinking, asleep or awake," he wrote to Bissell, "my mind has been on one thing constantly, and that is the situation politically in the city, county and state of New York. *The thing is not right*—that is, in my judgment. I believe there is a lot of lying and cheating going on, and unless the complexion changes we shall wake up, I think, the morning after election and find that we have been fooled by as base a set of cutthroats as ever scuttled a ship.

"The one of my friends at the front in the city of New York is Mr. Whitney. He is as true as steel, and is devoting himself night and day to the work. But his labor is altogether in the line of pacification and everything he does tends to persuading the men of Tammany Hall and those who belong to their gang, to vote the Democratic ticket. In the meantime my friends are entirely ignored, or are treated as if they deserved punishment. This is on the theory, as he says, that my friends we have anyway, and the point should be to gain the support and votes of those who were not my friends at Chicago and who were 'beaten and humiliated.'

"The campaign is to be put in the hands of men who have solemnly declared that I cannot carry New York.



Do you suppose that Hill wants to see me elected? Look at the men through the state whom he has been building up for two years and who are on the local committees. They will, I suppose, insist stronger than ever upon managing the campaign in their localities, and when the disaster comes will lay it on the May Convention people. . . . You will see, when men are appointed to attend to political business in the campaign, that they will be Hill men unless such a thing is prevented. You will see Sheehan on the Executive Committee, and then I believe the effort will be to let the ticket drop and hide their responsibility for it. If this is the result, Whitney will be as badly fooled, or worse, than anybody else; but you see, when a man is thoroughly saturated with pacification he doesn't suspect these things. . . . It's a funny thing for a man to be running for the Presidency with all the politicians against him."

As the campaign proceeded it became more and more evident that Whitney's faith was indeed pinned to the policy of pacifying Tammany Hall. He knew that Tammany leaders held the vote of New York City in the hollow of their hands, and that they were disposed to use it for Mr. Cleveland's defeat. With Richard Croker, who had succeeded John Kelly as "Big Chief," Whitney had great influence, having ably defended him against the charge of murder. With characteristic fidelity to a friend, Croker remembered the service gratefully, and through that gratitude Whitney hoped to bring Tammany into line for the Democratic candidate.

Much as Mr. Cleveland admired Mr. Whitney, the methods of conciliation always irked him, and in the secrecy of a confidential letter to Bissell he again poured out his heart regarding Whitney's latest proposition.

Gray Gables,  
Buzzard's Bay, Mass.  
*August 10, 1892.*

MY DEAR BISSELL:

There is an old story which you have doubtless heard but which was fixed in my mind by the fact that it is the only story I ever heard Chapin of Brooklyn tell.

A frontiersman had occasion to leave his cabin and his wife and children for a number of days and nights. When he returned he found that his house had been burned and the mutilated and charred remains of his family were scattered about the ground. He leaned upon his gun in silence for a moment, and then remarked with earnestness: "Well, I'll be damned, if this ain't *too* ridiculous!"

I felt like saying just that when I read in the paper yesterday morning that Sheehan had been appointed Chairman of the Campaign State Committee.

My condition is not improved by receiving a letter from Whitney to-day in which he suggests the form of a most abject and humble letter for me to write to Murphy amounting to a prayer for his support. I'll see the whole outfit to the Devil before I'll do it. Somebody must be crazy, and unless the people of the State take matters in their own hands some people stand a right smart chance to get left—and I am one of them. I expect to see Whitney on Monday. I am glad it is not to-day, for I don't believe I could hold myself in.

Yours faithfully,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Other Democrats also found it difficult to "hold themselves in" as they watched Whitney's constant overtures



to Tammany Hall. Many of Mr. Cleveland's followers feared that by this course he would arouse antagonism, not alone in Mugwump and Independent circles, but among conservative Democrats as well; not only in New York, but throughout the country, doing irreparable harm in the close states, and perhaps causing Cleveland's defeat. But Whitney was determined, his New York associates supported him, and during the rest of the summer the candidate was constantly reminded that "Murphy has the votes." "It is no use to say not to trust any of them," Whitney wrote on August 22d; "we have got to trust them. They have the organization and the power, and by trusting them we can make them pull straight. I wish you would do as much reconciling of recalcitrants as you see your way to do. You can do more with a word than I can with a speech."

Again and again Mr. Cleveland expressed his pent-up feelings, as these reminders came—to Bissell most freely of all. On September 4th, he wrote from Gray Gables:

MY DEAR BISSELL:

. . . I feel very gloomy and very much provoked and am not sure that I ought to write to you in such a mood. The whole policy of truckling conciliation which has characterized the campaign thus far has resulted in its legitimate fruit and I am urged now to send for Murphy and Sheehan and conciliate them.

Whitney wrote me a letter he wanted me to send to Murphy and I declined to do it—whereupon he wrote me a very petulant and unpleasant letter. He was here yesterday and we had a little talk—nothing unpleasant, but I can see that he is not satisfied and he seemed to be on the point of exploding. He professes to feel that the campaign is in a very dangerous shape and more than half

intimates that unless I get into personal relations with these men I will be defeated.

I told him I would go to New York whenever he desired and meet them and be as agreeable as I could, but I would not pledge myself to do their bidding in case of success. I further told him I did not want to annoy him, but that I did not have a particle of confidence in Sheehan and that I thought he would use any money or power that was put into his hands for the election of members of assembly to the end that Flower might be made Senator and he Governor.

I believe Tammany and Kings will do as well as they can, that the electoral tickets will be neglected for the legislative tickets in the rural districts, and that if I am defeated in the State it will be claimed as further proof of my unpopularity, which will be urged as an explanation of the result. The neglect of everything except tickling these men amounts to a craze at headquarters, and in the meantime the campaign, it seems to me, limps and halts.

I curse myself for getting into this scrape, and would get out of it to-day if I could. I will not give up my old friends for the gang, and yet I do not see why the latter want me to conciliate them unless they mean by that an assurance which they will regard as a promise of exclusive favor and influence.

Cannot you come and see me for a day? We are easily reached from Boston.

Yours faithfully,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

Mr. Whitney's persistence having at last brought from Mr. Cleveland a grudging consent to come down from Gray Gables in order that conciliation might have a fair



trial, the latter arrived in New York, and went at once to the Victoria Hotel, where Judge Herrick of Albany joined him by appointment, finding the candidate in a condition of unusual excitement. Mr. Cleveland remarked that he had been brought to the city to persuade the Democratic organization to support him; that if the recognition of that organization meant the ignoring of men who had stood by him in the state, he was prepared to decline the nomination and support any man substituted in his place; but that if his friends agreed that he should not yield to the organization, he was prepared to call mass meetings in every county in the state and to inform the people that the so-called Democratic organization had refused to support the regular Democratic nominee for the Presidency.

Judge Herrick replied that the organization ought to be recognized; that there were many bright men in the machine who could be given appointments abroad; that others could be brought down to Washington and kept under Mr. Cleveland's own eyes; that Mr. Cleveland's friends could be appointed to Federal positions in the state; and that in less than six months they would have control of the organization. At this point Mr. Whitney came in, accompanied by Mr. Dickinson, and among them they persuaded Mr. Cleveland to meet the Tammany chiefs, Murphy, Croker, and Sheehan, at a dinner of reconciliation which was to be staged in the Victoria Hotel. Judge Herrick was urged to be present also, but declined, feeling that he was *persona non grata* to the Tammany leaders.

But Mr. Cleveland proved conciliatory only in the going. When the dinner was ended, and the hour for discussion had arrived, he turned to the expectant machine men and said:

"Well, gentlemen, what do you want?"

"We want pledges from you," replied Mr. Sheehan. "We want to know what you are going to do if you are elected. We want you to give us promises that will satisfy us that the organization will be properly recognized if you become President again."

Mr. Cleveland doubled up his huge fist and smote the table.

"Gentlemen," he said, speaking slowly and with almost painful distinctness, "I will not go into the White House pledged to you or to any one else. I will make no secret promises. I'll be damned if I will."

Again the big fist whacked the table.

"What are you going to do then?" inquired Mr. Sheehan cynically.

"I'll tell you what I'm going to do," said Mr. Cleveland as he rose to his feet. "I intend to address a letter to the public in which I shall withdraw from the ticket. I intend to explain my situation and to report what you have said to me here. I will tell the voters of the country that I cannot give any secret pledges, and that unless I do you will not support the Democratic ticket. I will tell the voters that I do not want to stand in the way of a Democratic victory. That is what I shall do. Then, gentlemen, you can pick out a candidate to suit you, and if he is a proper man and the candidate of the party I will vote for him."

There was a pause.

"But I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Sheehan," added Mr. Cleveland, as he turned to the now breathless Lieutenant-Governor, "in my opinion public indignation will snow you and your organization out of sight before the end of a week."

Mr. Croker leaped to his feet at this point, exclaiming: "This must stop, Mr. Sheehan; I agree with Mr.



Cleveland. He cannot make any pledges and it is not right to ask for them."

Thus did Mr. Whitney's policy of conciliation conciliate by conquering, and Grover Cleveland again faced the election a free man.

Meanwhile he was engaged upon the uncongenial work of preparing his letter of acceptance. The day it was completed, he wrote to Gilder: "Take my advice, my dear friend, and never run for President."

The letter itself did not satisfy him. His own productions rarely did. Nor can it be said that it was a literary composition of great distinction. It was marked, as were all his writings, by a ruggedness of style and an involved and cumbersome construction, but it made perfectly clear Mr. Cleveland's thought, and contained not one word of doubtful meaning. The greater part of the letter he devoted to a discussion of the necessity of reducing the tariff to a revenue basis, but he touched also upon sound money, and civil service reform. He promised "consideration for our worthy veteran soldiers, and for the families of those who have died," while contending anew that our pension roll should be a roll of honor "uncontaminated by ill desert, and unvitiated by demagogic use."

The campaign developed no new or startling features, except the unexpected growth of the Populist strength in the West and in certain Southern districts, a growth the full meaning of which appeared later.

The Republicans, conscious that their ticket, Benjamin Harrison and Whitelaw Reid, was not an inspiring one, trusted that the hopeless break in the New York Democracy might give them victory. They knew that Tammany's declarations of loyalty to the Democratic ticket meant little, and put their faith in the confident assertion

of the Hill faction that Grover Cleveland could not carry New York.

During the campaign Mr. Cleveland received an invitation to pay a personal visit in Chicago at a time when Mrs. Harrison's illness compelled the Republican candidate to remain inactive. He replied: "I am unwilling to take a trip which . . . would be regarded as a political tour made by a candidate for the Presidency. My general aversion to such a trip is overwhelmingly increased in this particular instance when I recall the afflictive dispensation which detains at the bedside of his sick wife another candidate for the Presidency."

As the end of the season approached, Mr. Cleveland prepared to leave Gray Gables and return to New York. He had leased from his friend, Commodore Benedict, an attractive residence, 12 West 51st Street; and, during the summer, workmen had been busy remodeling and redecorating it. The Commodore had spared neither trouble nor expense in his effort to make it worthy of its new tenant. Early in October Mr. Cleveland moved in, making preparations as for a permanent home, and seeming almost as unconcerned regarding the election as did his baby daughter, of whom he wrote to Dr. Wilton Merle Smith: "Ruth lives her sweet little life in the midst of it all as unconsciously as though it were not history."

Four nights before election Mr. Cleveland, contrary to his established rule, spoke at the last grand rally of the campaign, at Oakland Rink, Jersey City. There was a heavy fog abroad, and a steady drizzling rain was falling; but the Democratic political clubs marched, nevertheless. And when the rink doors were thrown open there was a rush of eager Democrats, who, within ten minutes, filled every seat in the vast structure. The appearance of the ex-President, accompanied by Senator McPherson,



ex-Senator William Brinkerhoff, and William F. Harrity, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, caused a pandemonium of enthusiasm which became almost hysteria as Mr. Cleveland rose to speak. With characteristic directness, he launched at once into his prime theme, tariff reform, but in a most un-Clevelandesque manner. The speech was rankly partisan throughout. Like any ward politician, he pointed with pride, he whitewashed, he coaxed, he cajoled. He painted the Democrats lily white and the Republicans a very inky black. He drew inspiring pictures of the good Democrats and horrific caricatures of the wicked Republicans who would not let the Democrats do their duty.

On election night, a few intimate friends gathered at the Cleveland home to receive the returns, which were favorable from the first. As results became more and more certain, more guests arrived. The throng in the street also increased in size and enthusiasm until, at midnight, the ex-President yielded to the necessities of the occasion and addressed a few words to them.

The definite announcement of victory was brought by Mrs. Whitney, whose husband had informed the President of his defeat in 1888. She came into the drawing-room breathlessly radiant with excitement. The wires had just announced the final verdict and the long tension was broken. At once pandemonium reigned, but the President-elect was very quiet, weighed down with a sense of responsibility, and when his friends departed, at five A.M., they left behind a solemn victor.

The full details of the astonishing results came by slow stages. Cleveland had carried every doubtful state, and his majority in New York was over 45,000. His total electoral vote was 277, an increase of 190 over that of 1888, and of 59 over that of 1884. His popular vote of

5,556,543 was 16,214 more than that of 1888, and 681,557 more than that of 1884. There could be no doubt that it was, to a large extent, a personal victory. More than five and a half million Americans had expressed the desire that the leader, once rejected, should again lead the nation.

"I care more for principle than for the Presidency," he had said to Richard Watson Gilder, and had added that he would "have the Presidency clean or not at all." He had put himself outside intimate party counsels. He had enraged Democratic spoilsmen by his persistent refusal to pay party debts with public offices. He had disappointed the reformers who insisted that reform should be the only consideration. But, incidentally, he had laid deep the foundations of his place in history. And as a consequence he had, as William H. Taft later expressed it, "led his party to the greatest victory in its history."

But victory meant not peace but a change of battle front, for Edward Murphy, Jr., promptly announced his desire to represent New York in the United States Senate, an ambition abhorrent to the President-elect. Mr. Cleveland had known, of course, that Mr. Whitney's policy of conciliating the Tammany chieftains meant demands for compensation, the more difficult to resist the more effective the Tammany support should prove. But among all the horrible senatorial possibilities which he had discussed with his friends this one had never appeared. It seemed "too raw" even for Tammany, and he frankly said as much, first to Croker and Murphy, then to the general public. With that "eminent impartiality" to which his friend Bissell so often refers, he elaborated the reasons for his opposition, and entrusted them to the columns of the *New York World*:



"We need the best aid that we can procure . . . and the man who is selected as Senator from this state should be able, in the largest sense, to help the party fulfill its promises to the people. The people of our state who this year gave to the Democratic Electoral ticket a majority so large as to indicate that they expect much from Democratic supremacy, are entitled to a Senator who will not only represent their interests and their principles, but will be able to advance and defend them. We need in the Senate a man of training and experience in public affairs as well as a man of clear ideas concerning the important questions which confront our party. It seems to me that the selection of Mr. Murphy does not indicate a disposition to choose for the Senatorship a man of the kind that is needed at this juncture, and I fear that this first manifestation of the power put in our hands will give rise to a feeling of public disappointment such as our party ought not to be called upon to face."

The anti-Tammany press throughout the country also did what it could to defeat Murphy. The *Philadelphia Ledger* of December 30th declared: "If Mr. Murphy were elected Senator, the President would be expected to allow Mr. Hill and Mr. Murphy to divide the Federal offices of New York between themselves as spoils to their fellows, the Tammany henchmen. Mr. Murphy, like Mr. Hill, is an advocate of free silver, an enemy of civil service and of every other political reform of which Mr. Cleveland is the earnest, public-spirited supporter. If he refused to give the Federal offices to these two Senators, they would use all the advantages the office of Senator confers upon them to embarrass and annoy him and to defeat the wholesome efforts of the Administration to secure and maintain good government."

But Tammany Hall controlled the New York Legislature, in whose hands the Constitution then placed the choice of New York Senators, Croker and Hill controlled Tammany Hall, and Murphy became United States Senator.





















## Date Due

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